CLONING: DON'T BE AFRAID
JAMES Q. WILSON

the weekly Standard

MAY 26, 1997 $2.95

BE AFRAID. BE VERY AFRAID.

The Meaning of Deep Blue's Victory

by Charles Krauthammer

The Anti-China Lobby Grows
LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

Schubert: Still a Prodigy at 200
JAY NORDLINGER

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the weekly Standard

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Office Politics

This week, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will hear a case called *Federal Trade Commission* v. *Staples, Inc. and Office Depot, Inc.* The Clinton FTC is suing the two companies to block their proposed merger as a violation of federal antitrust law. The government alleges that the merger will reduce competition and raise consumer prices.

That allegation is almost mind-bogglingly stupid. Staples and Office Depot, of course, are two of the major pioneers in office-supply "superstore" marketing, which has *dropped* consumer prices throughout the office-products industry rather dramatically. And yet, put together, the two companies still control only 5 percent of that market. So how exactly can this merger pose an antitrust problem? We don't know.

We do know that the FTC has behaved badly in this case. In one particularly egregious instance, the FTC drafted an affidavit about office-products competition in Tampa, Florida, and then somehow persuaded Cindy Callaway, the business manager of a local company, to sign it. Callaway's FTC affidavit says: "I can purchase all my office supply needs at the office supply superstores without having to go from store to store. . . . Other retailers . . . do not carry all the items that I need." And if the proposed merger takes place, the FTC document continues, "prices may increase" because there would remain "no satisfactory alternatives" in the area.

Well. Attorneys for Staples and Office Depot interviewed Callaway. She told them, and swore in a subsequent affidavit, that she makes 80 to 90 percent of her company's purchases at a place called Viking Office Supply. Viking, she says, is "more convenient" and "sometimes cheaper" than either Staples or Office Depot. In any case, "There are many places in the Tampa Bay area to shop for general office supplies. It is a hotbed of competition."

The FTC appears to have manufactured its feeble evidence from thin air, in other words. But they're going to court anyway. And they're probably going to lose. And taxpayers, in whose name the FTC claims to be working, will foot the bill.

Al Gore's Paper Trail

In our cover story last week on Al Gore, Tucker Carlson reported on the October 1987 Hollywood lunch where Al and Tipper Gore recanted their opposition to obscene rock lyrics and groveled for forgiveness before a group of show-biz execs. The anecdote was drawn from a contemporaneous account in *Daily Variety*, which had managed to obtain a tape recording of the Gores' self-humiliation.

We don't want to compromise our reporter's "sources and methods," as the intelligence jargon has it. But it's fair to say that sometimes in reporting on major political figures who will probably be running in the next presidential election, good material about their past is made available by opponents, who keep files familiarly known as "oppo," short for "opposition research."

In this case, though, the transmission belt is running in the other direction. In the week since Carlson's story on Gore appeared, there has been a groundswell of interest in obtaining copies of the original *Daily Variety* account. One Hill staffer let us know that there is a waiting list at the Library of Congress for *Daily Variety* back issues. Prominent on the list: the offices of Democrat Dick Gephardt of Missouri and Republican John Kasich of Ohio. Hmmm . . . a sudden interest in the history of pop culture? Or does this count as a hat in the ring, guys?

The Wit of Bill Clinton

In his first foray into anthropology since last year's memorable encounter with the 500-year-old mummy of a 14-year-old Incan girl ("If I were a single man, I might ask that mummy out"), President Clinton toured a museum in Mexico last week that included in its collection two human skulls—relics of the ancient Olmec culture of southern Mexico best known for its custom of "beautifying" infants by screwing their heads in a vise-like contraption, thus flattening their skulls.

As reported by both the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*, the president was asked by one of his entourage to speculate on the deleterious effect this might have had on early childhood development—an obvious reference to the recent White House conference on that subject hosted by Mrs. Clinton. "It depends," said our prez, "on whether you read to them or sing to them while you're squeezing their heads."

The *Los Angeles Times* referred to early childhood

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development as an issue "of particular interest to the first couple"; the president's slip into irreverent hilarity gives rise to the suspicion that only half of that couple is really full of liberal piety on this issue.

Time Still Loathes the Eighties

Time published an article last week about how great life is in the United States. "We're living longer, breathing cleaner air, drinking cleaner water. Crime is in a free fall . . . and the downtowns we once gave up for dead are bristling with coffee bars, green markets, life." Maybe you remember life in the U.S.A. as being pretty good in the '80s, too? No way, says *Time*.

Some might have thought that the blame-it-on-Reagan ethic that once pervaded establishment journalism had run its course, but it still thrives in the Time-Life building. *Time*'s Eric Pooley asserts that "in the '80s, morning in America sounded good but proved to be a false dawn. The expansion was fueled by 'high-yield' junk bonds and government debt, and when interest rates soared and the market crashed, the junk dealers on Wall Street started to look like perfect mirror images of the crack entrepreneurs in the slums."

Come again? Junk-bond dealers as crack dealers? This analysis is sufficiently misguided that it doesn't merit a serious rebuttal, except to point out that it was "junk bonds" that financed (among many other useful things) the rise of the Turner Broadcasting System, which last time we checked had merged with Pooley's employers, making him, we suppose, the "perfect mirror image" of a low-level dealer.

Minneapolis vs. Maggie

The Center of the American Experiment, a think tank in Minneapolis, hosted Margaret Thatcher at its May 9 annual dinner. But the visit of the former British prime minister was not universally welcomed. Six members of the city council—one short of a majority—worked themselves up into a snit. Three days before her arrival, they wrote to Mitch Pearlstein, president of the think tank, to "express our serious concern" over the invitation (translated: please disinvite her). "Our City Council," wrote the Minneapolis Six, "has supported the struggle for justice and civil rights in Ireland. Margaret Thatcher has opposed that struggle . . ." Pearlstein wrote back, after the event, calling the letter an ugly example of both "political correctness" and "old style, ethnically flavored pandering" and "the most remarkable piece of political grandstanding I've ever seen up close and personal." He said it was an "embarrassment" to all Minneapolitans. In the context of Minneapolis politics, Pearlstein's response was positively Thatcherian. And Lady Thatcher was a big hit.

Update

Last December, we noted on this page that New York philanthropist Virginia Gilder had offered a scholarship to every student unfortunate enough to be attending Albany's worst public elementary school. This generous program, known as A Better Choice, provoked a Stalinoid reaction by the education establishment but much interest and from the parents of these inner-city children. More than one-third of the students have now applied for scholarships, which cover 90 percent of the cost of tuition at any school of their choosing, up to a maximum of $2,000 a year. And applications are still coming in.

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Casual

The Ancient Mariner at O'Hare

I used to think that stories were mostly lies, chunks of experience sanded down too neatly to be believed. Every tale I've ever told has run a little smoother in the telling than in the living. Recently, however, I have begun to wonder whether that isn't more a failure of my living—of my eyes to see, my ears to hear. When you know the way that stories ought to go, you may find yourself nudging life to go along. But somewhere in experience there still exists the reason stories want to go the way they do.

"God knows the price is too high and no one in his right mind could be willing to pay it knowingly," Hannah Arendt cried when her sad friend, W.H. Auden, died in 1973. But Auden knew what every poet since Homer has known: "that the gods spin unhappiness and evil things to mortals so that they may be able to tell the tales and sing the songs."

Such tales are told and songs sung in the most prosaic of places these days. Airport lounges swirl with epic stories of sudden storms and near disasters, flights missed or flights caught only by the narrowest of margins. It's always the night before Christmas as these odysseys begin, or Thanksgiving or Easter or the Fourth of July. "So there I was in Chattanooga," the old man in the tweed overcoat at O'Hare was telling the college boy flying standby to Milwaukee, "and there's just this one poor guy left closing up the rent-a-car counter . . . "

The tired boy was miserable, of course, because he's living it *now*, not telling it afterwards, and no one wants to be snowbound in some airport, red-eyed and stranded with the stench of all-night travel sickening even in one's own nostrils. But he listened and listened, watching the snow slant through the arc lights on the disappearing runway.

And as he listened, you could see forming slowly in his mind the story *he* would tell when he finally got back home: "So there I was, waiting and waiting, afraid to go to sleep and miss the flight announcement, and the whole while, there's this strange old guy sitting next to me, droning on and on in an endless story about the time he wanted to rent a car on Christmas Eve. And no matter how hard I try, I can't seem to get away from him . . . " *It is an ancient Mariner, / And he stoppeth one of three.*

I even used to think that we tell stories in self-defense, rounding off the bad life, easing the painful edges. After watching that boy and that old man in tweed, I have begun to wonder whether it isn't the other way around—whether we don't have lives for the sake of having stories. No one chooses calamity, but just to sit and listen a while in airport bars or coffee shops is to know that nearly everyone is willing to *have* lived through it, to have a story left to tell.

Most travel is just travail, a deadening getting-through only for the sake of getting through. The patient faces waiting at an airline ticket counter have the same blank, forsaken look as dust sheets on old furniture; the frustrated ones have the baffled look of angry cows about to smash themselves against a fence. And yet, tweaked just one notch closer to disaster, travel suddenly inverts itself into that stuff from which the oldest myths were made—falling rightly, naturally, gently into the ancient patterns of a story.

The first flakes were sticking to the taxi's window as I left for the airport to fly home. There was important news, my wife had said over the phone, but she didn't want to tell me what it was until I got back to New York.

"Only a little spring storm," the taxi driver assured me as we rolled down the gray, winter streets that flow from the University of Chicago out toward the tollways, "the plows can take care of something like this in no time." But even Chicago's practiced drivers had slowed to a crawl by the time we reached the toll booths, and the radio dispatcher announced that flights leaving O'Hare were delayed at least an hour.

"Did I ever tell you," the driver began as he fumbled for change in a Dixie cup taped to the dashboard, "about the time I picked up a fare at O'Hare on Christmas Eve, snowing just like this, and he wants to go all the way to Peoria?"

"No, I can't say you ever did," I answered, and settled back to stare out the snowy window at the faces of the drivers inching along the airport road.

"So there I was," he murmured on and on, "wondering how I'd ever let him talk me into this . . . " But I knew it would turn out all right, with family and dinner and warm clothes waiting at the story's end. That is the nature of tales, to be told, and told, and told again.

J. Bottum

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Just Say No Deal

The Weekly Standard's raison d'être was never so clear. Less than five days after the budget agreement was heralded, the May 12 issue was in my hands. Stephen Moore's "Why Make a Deal?" had all the dirty figures before anyone else. For this early warning of coming disaster, conservatives, especially the GOP leaders who made this strategic misstep, owe you. With quick feedback from the grass roots, they can correct course and move more gracefully away from the abyss.

The "No Deal" editorial bemoaned the GOP's lack of courage on spiritual and moral issues. The editors are right, of course, but please don't underrate fiscal policy. The new generation of Republican leaders taking over from Bush and Dole went to college after Marxist and Keynesian concepts peaked on American campuses. Thus, the Right now has a huge advantage because of its predilection for freedom and market economics. We automatically attract leaders whose fiscal instincts are better than those of the people who are interested in leftist ideas. The political power of a robust standard of living is our sword and shield.

The great pity of the budget deal is that Republican leaders, armed with impeccable economic principles, were outmaneuvered by adversaries living in a 150-year-old time warp. What went wrong?

Robert A. Farquhar
East Williston, NY

The editorial "No Deal" was right on the mark. We Republicans sent our representatives to Washington to make changes. But the GOP retreated every time the Democrats lied or started name-calling. The party doesn't understand why those of us out here in the hinterland are upset.

In Lincoln's time, people gave up on both parties and formed the GOP. The party triumphed over the pro-slavery Democrats because it was right. Perhaps we need to do the same thing today and elect representatives who won't back down. The pro-slavery Democrats were wrong then, and they're wrong today when they think they can keep control by making us all beholden to government handouts.

What the Republicans should tell Clinton and the Democrats is "No deal."

William E. Wentworth
Dover, NH

I applaud the theme of your "No Deal" editorial. Cutting the regular tax capital gains rate will be a hollow victory if there is no corresponding Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) relief. Otherwise, many taxpayers with significant capital gains will continue to pay a tax of up to 28 percent, which is identical to the present top rate on capital gains. They will just be paying the top AMT rate rather than a capital-

gains rate. Lowering the regular tax capital gains rate without AMT relief will be like receiving Ted Kennedy's liver in a transplant.

Al Blecher
New York, NY

Thank you to Fred Barnes for his contrary view of the current budget deal ("Fred Barnes Dissents," May 12). Insightful conservatives discern that the true contraposition to government programs is not tax cuts. Private opportunity is the way to solve the problems the programs were to address in the first place. Promised cuts in the capital gains tax rate, with the multiplier effect from investment, hold the key to displacing government. The cuts should be larger and would be if Dole had won, but we haven't seen any cuts in a decade. Give it a rest, pessimists!

Timothy P. O'Neill
Marco Island, FL

Clintonian Conversation

Andrew Ferguson's exquisite review of Robert Reich's *Locked in the Cabinet* ("Little Man, What Now?," May 12) has enabled me to identify the pathology that lights up Reich, the Clintons, and their fellow travelers: the Munchausen Complex. This affliction involves the telling of a tall tale to get attention. Take for example the Volunteerism Summit. The tall tale is that there is a major crisis in America, one that requires the intervention of the president and the collectivization of the national government. Of course, the only crisis is that created by 40 years of liberal socio-economic policy. It is the same sort of thing the FBI accused Richard Jewell of doing: planting a bomb in order to be the hero. The difference is that Jewell has been exonerated while Reich and the Clintons are still in business.

John Clark Salyer
Sterling, VA

Volunteer Madness

By the time I read the last page of Matt Labash's devastatingly entertaining article on the Volunteerism Summit ("They Did it For the Children," May 12) I was helpless with laughter. He skewers so many trendy left-wing platitudes with such wit that I wanted the article to go on and on.

What can possibly be wrong with the mental processes of our country's leaders? Can they delude themselves into thinking that lofty postures and clichés during earnest meetings are apt to achieve anything at all? I guess if they allowed themselves to recognize their own vacuousness they might not feel good about themselves.

Harriet Vane
Bloomfield Hills, MI

New Measure for Culture

In "Hearings Impaired" (May 12), David Brooks jeers at Indian artists and their creations. He even sneers at

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the Japanese for honoring their traditional artists. Brooks never says what he supports, but I gather that he disapproves of public funding for the arts.

Our time will be measured by its Indian baskets and other creative arts. It might help if Brooks realized that no one cares who was the senior editor at the baloney mill in Cairo when the Pyramids were built.

JOE WILSON
SILVER SPRING, MD

BREAKING UP IS EASY TO DO

David Frum's hand-wringing about the future of Canada ("Maple Leaf Ragged," May 12) is pointless and irresponsible. Frum divines a dark and foreboding future for Canada.

First, it is untrue that Canada would be worse off without Quebec. In fact, Canada would be better off. Citizens in the "Rest of Canada" (as Quebec's leaders have dubbed it) have long recognized that Quebec's political demands cannot be satisfied. Unfortunately, the federal government does not understand this.

The demands of the Québécois are rooted in a peculiar form of pride, which is antithetical to constitutional republicanism. Constitutional republics are based on formal rights and liberties that are secured so that people can live free and peaceful lives. As Americans realize, citizens feel pride for their achievement in securing those rights, and this pride provides the cement for their status as a republic.

The people of Quebec, however, desire recognition, not for their pride as a republic, but for their nationalism rooted in ancestry. Doing well in Quebec society depends on whether or not one is a member of the blood-line, or *pure-laine* (literally: pure wool). This is a result of the myth that the Québécois are the descendants of the original families who first inhabited the region. Such recognition has nothing to do with achievement or with liberty.

Second, Americans may wonder what to do if their largest trading partner splits up. It will be in America's interest to ensure a stable Canada and an economically viable independent Quebec. This means encouraging the current premier of Quebec, Lucien Bouchard, to cut his bureaucracies and programs and to continue reducing the deficit.

Probably the best thing to do is to encourage U.S. investment in Quebec. This would demonstrate to Quebec's powerful public unions, which currently oppose Bouchard's deficit reduction, that small government and a robust economy are necessary for a strong independent Quebec.

Unfortunately, Frum fails to mention any of this, and he gives his American readers the impression that Canada's future is full of doom. Perhaps Frum spends too much time in Toronto where hand-wringing and shallow thinking rule the day. Deconfederation would benefit both sides, Canada and Quebec, if it is managed with sufficient prudence and statesmanship.

JOHN VON HEYKING
SOUTH BEND, IN

ALBANIANS DEFEND KADARE

Stephen Schwartz's article "Ismail Kadare's Prize Fight—Don't Give the Nobel Prize to an Albanian Party Hack" (March 24) left us aggrieved. Kadare is from a nation of barely 3 million people. Why were his writings translated into more than 40 languages? Because his work is of universal character and appeals to men and women throughout the world. As far as Kadare the man is concerned, the very fact that last year he was chosen as a member for life of the French Academy speaks to his ethical and moral values.

But let us come to what hurt us most. Albania's roots go deep into ancient history. Its major contributions in many fields are undeniable. Statues of George Kastriota Skanderbeg can be found in most European capitals. Alexander Moissi is recognized as one of the greatest dramatic actors of the century. The deep red of the medieval painter Onufri is compared to that of Rembrandt and there is no unanimity as to whose is richer. Mother Theresa enjoys universal love and respect as one of the worthiest figures of our times. And Kadare's roots grow from the very same soil. Eventually the day would dawn when the Nobel prize was awarded to a writer, albeit from a small country, whose work speaks to people around the world. Hence our great concern.

Schwartz's arrows are aimed not only against Kadare but against all Albanians. Could this be a case of the highest peaks attracting lightning? Schwartz is not satisfied with attacking the literary merits of Kadare but insults the very culture of our nation that has in Kadare its most distinguished son, its "highest peak." It would have been more honest if Schwartz had titled his article "Do Not Give the Nobel Prize to an Albanian."

EKREM BARDHA
MËRGIM KORÇA
GJEKË GJONLEKAJ
WEST BLOOMFIELD, MI

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ RESPONDS: ***The bluffing comments of Bardha, Korça, and Gjonlekaj could have appeared in* Zeri I Popullit*, the official party daily under Albanian despot Enver Hoxha. Ismail Kadare's books were translated into 40 languages because, and only because, the Communist regime paid for such translations.***

According to Bardha, Korça, and Gjonlekaj, my article was aimed against "all Albanians." Would this include my significant other for 32 years, the painter Claire-Drita Fraschina, who is of Albanian origin? Does my activity as a board member of the Albanian Catholic Institute, as noted in the credit line of my article, suggest a desire to attack Albanians?

Sharing roots with Mother Theresa is not enough to justify a Nobel prize, such as was awarded to her. If it were, Hoxha or Sali Berisha, Albania's current semi-dictator, would also qualify. It is too bad Nobel prizes cannot be awarded to Gjergj Fishta or Martin Camaj, who really were distinguished sons of the Albanian people, and truly deserved them.

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the weekly Standard

Legal Insanity

On April 29, the federal government told employers "they may not discriminate against qualified workers with mental illness, may not ask job applicants if they have a history of mental illness, and must take reasonable steps to accommodate employees with psychiatric or emotional problems." That's what the first paragraph of the next day's *New York Times* story said, anyway. But the *Times* got it wrong. The government actually "told" private employers these things in July 1990, when Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. The workplace provisions of the ADA have covered every American business with 15 or more employees since 1994—that's at least 85 percent of the nation's current workforce. And from the start, discrimination against Americans with psychiatric disabilities—in hiring, career advancement, and working accommodations—has been grounds for restitution and punitive-damage claims in federal court.

Needless to say, employment discrimination against otherwise competent people who suffer some treatable mental illness is not nice. Perhaps it should even be illegal. In any case, Congress has so decided, and that's okay by us. But the ADA, as applied, isn't okay at all.

Supporters of the Americans with Disabilities Act argue that physically and mentally impaired Americans have always faced sweeping and irrational barriers to employment. They point out that most "disabled" people still do not have full-time work. And they routinely insist that prejudice—"myths, fears, and stereotypes" is the stock phrase—is a major reason why. The sheer volume of ADA-related complaints in the past four years—almost 73,000—might seem to sustain this contention.

But only a tiny fraction of these cases, barely 10 percent, involve accusations that employers have refused to hire the disabled. The vast majority involve people already in the workforce who allege they were let go wrongfully. And only a tiny fraction of *them*, again barely over 10 percent, suffer classic disabilities, like vision, hearing, or motion impairment. In fact, the most common ADA complaints come from people with back pain. Next come neurological, emotional, or psychiatric ailments. There's good reason to suspect that an increasing number of Americans assert "disabilities" to extort money or favor from employers when they have been fired or denied promotion.

Consider. There have been ADA claims by asthmatic firefighters. By one-armed policemen. By a 460-pound prison inmate who wanted a bigger cell. By an office worker who smelled so bad she made her colleagues vomit. Worst of all, perhaps, there have been repeated ADA claims made by employees whose on-the-job performance is inadequate, disruptive, or actually dangerous—and who explain their actions after the fact by reference to a "psychiatric disability." In this context, we find people who claim they suffer from "chronic lateness syndrome." And alcoholic surgeons. And people who bring loaded guns to work or threaten to blow their supervisor's brains out. And a nuclear power plant engineer who says his depression is exacerbated by proximity to nuclear power. And a bank employee who says his depression is exacerbated by negative annual appraisals. And so on.

ADA defenders say these horror stories paint a dishonest and incomplete picture of how the disability law really works. Many of the most extreme claims were quickly dismissed in administrative proceedings, they note. And the few genuinely loopy cases that ever reached trial were generally rejected by their juries. But the paucity of $300,000 punitive-damage awards to ADA "victims" with outlandish or obviously bogus psychiatric disabilities proves very little about the law's full effect.

ADA is not a traditional civil-rights statute that turns on questions of discriminatory *intent* by an employer. In fact, under ADA, malign intentions are basically irrelevant: An employer may quite consciously treat a disabled person exactly as he would anyone else and still find himself in violation of the law. Why? Because this law requires him to make "reasonable accommodations" for the needs *and behavior* of any "person with a disability" who might thereafter be able to perform the "essential functions" of a job.

But what is a "reasonable accommodation"? What, for that matter, is a "psychiatric disability," and what if its symptoms are indistinguishable from poor work

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performance? These are questions of definition. And it was to answer them that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission released a new "enforcement guidance" on ADA's mental-health protections. It was this document that spurred the *New York Times* story.

Alas, the EEOC "guidance" offers precious little guidance. The agency insists that ADA should never conflict with common sense. But the agency is still committed to an assault on widespread discrimination grounded in, well, "myths, fears, and stereotypes." So it has decided not so much to restrict its interpretation of ADA, but rather to urge an expansive understanding of "common sense" on the rest of us.

According to the EEOC, "reasonable accommodation" of an employee's psychiatric disability encompasses virtually anything that doesn't impose a vaguely outlined "undue hardship" on a business: new office space, soundproofing, relaxed supervision, "job coaching," or reassignment. You may even have to "accommodate" the psychiatrically disabled in the workplace by allowing them not to work—through a grant of extended unpaid leave.

There are many other problems with the new guidance. Multiple provisions appear to conflict with other state and federal laws, for example. But the biggest confusion is still the most basic: Who is covered by ADA and under what circumstances? ADA is supposed to cover "any mental or psychological disorder." And the place to find out the meaning of the word "disorder" is the psychiatric profession's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, now in its fourth edition. Known as DSM-IV, it lists 10 specific "personality disorders"—and an eleventh, the personality disorder "Not Otherwise Specified." Together, these categories describe almost every sort of weird or obnoxious (but less than incapacitating) behavior known to man.

Are you allowed to fire an employee who is persistently unclean and verbally abusive to his colleagues? No, says the EEOC, not if that employee has a personality disorder and the code of conduct you are applying has no meaningful bearing on the job tasks he must perform. Can you refuse to hire a personality-disordered man with a history of violence? Only if you first appraise "the most current medical knowledge" and then prove that a "specific behavior" by this man poses a "direct" and "significant" risk of imminent violence. If one of your employees happens to mention that he is "depressed and stressed," are you legally on notice for some subsequent ADA action? Yes, you are.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission now pursues a vision of the American workplace in which every employed jerk or miscreant enjoys a presumptive claim to protected civil-rights status—in which every American employer, worried about possible litigation, must codify in writing workplace behavioral standards that almost all of us take for granted.

But it's not the EEOC's fault, not really. The Americans with Disabilities Act that Congress overwhelmingly passed in 1990 is one of the worst-drafted pieces of legislation in history. Congress may not have meant the law to mean what the EEOC says it means. But it was Congress that left most practical decisions about the law's meaning in the EEOC's hands.

So Congress should rewrite ADA to ensure that its application to most of American daytime life is fair, humane, and *rational*. Drawing the necessary legal distinctions for "accommodations" and "disability" will not be easy. But not doing so would mean leaving federal civil-rights law in its present state of disorder. And that, you should pardon the expression, would be insane.

— David Tell, for the Editors

Abortion Concession

by Fred Barnes

THANKS BUT NO THANKS, Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle told President Clinton on May 14. After days of haggling, the White House had drafted a letter that endorsed Daschle's bill banning late-term abortions. But Daschle figured he'd be better off without the letter. Why? Opponents of abortion are profoundly distrustful of Clinton on the issue, convinced he says one thing, then does another. For instance, the president said last year he'd sign legislation outlawing partial-birth abortions if only an exception were added for cases in which a woman's health is threatened. Oops, the White House said later, we forgot to mention one other exception: The ban must not cover partial-birth abortions in the fifth and sixth months of pregnancy—when most of them occur. Clinton also assured Baptist leaders he didn't want an exception for threats to mental health. Then he backed bills that allowed one. Anyway, the letter to Daschle was never released. Deferring to the senator, the president endorsed the bill verbally and off camera.

Maybe that explains why the press missed the significance of Clinton's endorsement and of the Daschle

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bill itself. For Clinton and Daschle, the bill marked a real shift, not just a rhetorical one. The Daschle bill would put a sharp limit on the right to an abortion. All abortions after the point of viability (when the baby can live outside the womb) would be unlawful. And the Daschle bill didn't include the usual catch-all exception for the "health" of the mother—an exception that has the effect of allowing abortion on demand. Daschle narrowed the exception to cases threatening death or "grievous" physical injury to the woman.

True, the ban could still be evaded by abortionists, but they would face potential prosecution and stiff penalties. Moreover, the ban might reach into the second trimester, barring abortions as early as the 22nd or 23rd week of pregnancy, thus rolling back the reach of *Roe* v. *Wade*. Yes, Clinton and Daschle may have been trying to make their position on abortion more popular. But they did inch toward the pro-life position. They offered concessions not only in language and emphasis but also in substance.

So the question is: Might the president, Daschle, and others be prompted to move further? If so, the gridlock that has kept a ban on either late-term or partial-birth abortions from becoming law might be broken. The Daschle bill itself never had a chance. It was defeated 64 to 36 in the Senate. The principal pro-life measure banning partial-birth abortions with the single exception of protecting the life of the mother isn't expected to become law either. It looks to be shy of sufficient votes to override a promised Clinton veto. Last year, when Clinton's veto of a similar measure was sustained, no attempt at compromise was made. Now, given the new position of the White House and Daschle, there may be an effort. At least there will be a debate among pro-lifers over whether to mount one. Argues pro-lifer William Bennett: "We should say, Sen. Daschle, you were dead serious about reducing the number of abortions. Let's talk."

At the moment, pro-life leaders aren't exactly echoing Bennett. Douglas Johnson, the influential lobbyist for the National Right to Life Committee, opposes any offer of compromise. "We've gotten behind enemy lines and we're blowing up ammo dumps," he says. "Why should we voluntarily return to the beach?" But Rep. Henry Hyde, the leading pro-lifer in Congress, is open to talks. "I'm not as enthusiastic as Bill Bennett, but I concede [the Daschle bill] is a gain and a plus" for the pro-life side, Hyde says. "It may be the basis for further discussions." Sen. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, who deftly managed the partial-birth bill in the Senate, says he's "open to working with anyone . . . to look at other ways we can get at these very prickly [abortion] issues." On the Senate floor on May 15, Santorum said he believes Daschle is sincere about curbing abortion.

What's obvious is that the center of gravity in the abortion debate has shifted, even if only slightly. Though pro-choice, Daschle sounded like a pro-lifer in promoting his bill. "That is moral and linguistic progress," says Bennett. "It shows the moral high ground of the pro-life movement has had some impact." Republican strategist Jeffrey Bell says many liberal legislators "no longer believe it's tenable to defend late-term abortions. This is a very significant political development." And it's evidence that Johnson and National Right to Life were right to put a spotlight on the horror of partial-birth abortion. "It's making people question abortion," says Bell.

The partial-birth issue has terrified many pro-choice members of Congress. Santorum has a simple explanation of why it has caught on: "You can see the baby." In a partial-birth abortion, all but the baby's head emerges from the womb. Then the baby is killed by having its skull pierced and its brain sucked out. Democratic senator Daniel P. Moynihan of New York, who is pro-choice, has called the procedure infanticide. Last fall, Democratic pollster Celinda Lake advised pro-choice candidates not to talk about the baby in partial-birth cases. "Voters believe that this procedure, no matter what we call it, kills an infant," Lake said in a memo. "We cannot get around this basic belief." TV ads attacking partial-birth proved effective in several campaigns, nearly causing the defeat of Democratic senator Tom Harkin of Iowa. Thus, Clinton, Daschle, and many pro-choice members of Congress might agree to a new Daschle bill, with the exceptions to a general ban on post-viability abortions made airtight and real teeth added to enforcement. Daschle says he'd be willing to talk, but would never "compromise on the issue of health."

At the White House, the prevailing view is that it's pro-lifers, not Clinton, who won't compromise. "They ought to recognize there's a broad middle-of-the-road consensus on restricting late-term abortions," says press secretary Mike McCurry. "If they wanted to move policy to where the consensus is, they would pocket a victory" by accepting the Daschle bill. Actually, Clinton may be the biggest impediment to a deal. For one thing, he's as distrusted as ever by the pro-life community. A year ago, he personally drafted a letter to the current and past presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention on partial-birth, insisting his position had been misunderstood. This May 12, the Baptists quoted back to him his words endorsing only the narrowest of exceptions. They said he has adopted "a position that betrays the emphatic assurance you gave us in your letter."

There's a bigger problem at the White House. When the never-released letter to Daschle was being

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prepared, a full-blown legal debate broke out. Justice Department lawyers asserted the Daschle bill was an unconstitutional encroachment on *Roe* v. *Wade*. After days of squabbling, the White House counsel's office overruled Justice and decided to go along with Daschle. But even that "was not a unanimous verdict," says a presidential aide, and a qualifying phrase was planted in the letter, saying the endorsement was "subject to the expected judicial scrutiny." This means getting Clinton's approval of a stronger, better Daschle bill would be difficult. Not impossible, though.

Executive editor Fred Barnes appears weekly on* Fox on Politics *on the Fox News Channel.

Cutting the Tax-cut Pie

by Matthew Rees

When a scheduler from Newt Gingrich's office called Ed Crane, president of the libertarian Cato Institute, to invite him to discuss the budget deal with House Republican leaders recently, Crane's response was curt: "Tell the speaker to cut some spending." Then he hung up. Paul Weyrich, president of the conservative Free Congress Foundation and National Empowerment Television, also is apoplectic over the budget. He says he and other opponents are "loyal to principles, not to the party"; the Christian Coalition, mildly supportive of the deal, is "a creature of the Republicans." Weyrich sees the two sides in this fight as "pro-establishment" and "anti-establishment."

The budget deal has crystallized a split among traditional Republican allies. While congressional leaders have mostly managed to keep their troops from publicly opposing the balanced-budget agreement, outside groups influential in the GOP are divided.

THANKS TO THE BUDGET DEAL, GOP INFIGHTING IS AT ITS HIGHEST PITCH SINCE REPUBLICANS TOOK CONTROL OF CONGRESS TWO YEARS AGO.

The infighting is at its highest pitch since Republicans took control of Congress a little more than two years ago. It mirrors the disarray plaguing House Republicans (who suffered an embarrassing defeat last week over what should have been a simple procedural vote). Optimists say this is much ado about nothing and that the split will be patched up in time for next year's midterm elections. Pessimists see a ruptured coalition that could suffer losses in 1998.

Whatever the future may hold, for now the Republican hierarchy must notice how many of its friends have jumped ship. Cato was first out of the blocks in opposition, followed by the conservative Heritage Foundation. Heritage published a paper entitled "The 1997 Budget Agreement: The Return of Big Government" charging that the policy outlines contained in the budget deal "may be worse than doing nothing." Close behind was Citizens for a Sound Economy, a free-market think tank led by Bush White House counsel Boyden Gray and Reagan budget director Jim Miller. They assert that the agreement will bring "a significant expansion of the size and reach of the federal government." Gary Bauer of the conservative Family Research Council calls the agreement "dopey," and former presidential candidate Steve Forbes said in a speech at the recent Microsoft CEO summit that Congress, in its haste to reach a balanced budget, had cooked the books in a way "that would land you in jail if you tried it."

On the other side of this divide are the Christian Coalition, Grover Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform, and the National Federation of Independent Business, all tentatively supporting the deal in hopes of securing their preferred tax cuts. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, says the agreement is not as bad as the ill-fated 1990 budget deal, but warns, "We want the $500-per-child tax credit fully funded and made permanent. Anything less and we could oppose the agreement." Reed acknowledges his credit could cost up to $125 billion over five years, consuming most of the $135 billion allocated for all the tax cuts. He admits, "I don't know how you get there."

Norquist, a Gingrich adviser, is just about as vague. He says Republicans must secure tax relief in the four areas they've agreed to—capital gains, estate taxes, individual retirement accounts, and the child tax credit—but "how we do this is less important than that we do it at all."

The $135 billion in gross tax cuts over five years is the one provision of the balanced-budget agreement

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that's prevented a full-scale mutiny on the right. But there's a problem: Fully funding the proposed tax cuts would cost about $220 billion, $85 billion more than can be delivered. Whose ox will be gored? According to Gingrich, maybe no one's: He recently told a group of conservatives he will minimize the shortfall by instructing Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation to provide "historically accurate" dynamic assumptions concerning the effects of capital-gains tax cuts. Sounds good, except that no one knows what Gingrich means by "historically accurate," and regardless of how capital-gains is counted, there will still be a shortfall.

The challenge now for GOP leaders is to stem defections in Congress. The men most on the spot are the chairmen of the tax-writing committees, Bill Archer of House Ways and Means and Bill Roth of Senate Finance. Both are 26-year veterans of Capitol Hill and among the party's most fervent tax cutters. Archer advocates abolishing the IRS and instituting a national sales tax, while Roth was the original cosponsor in 1978 (with Jack Kemp) of the across-the-board tax cut that became Reagan's economic centerpiece.

Neither Archer nor Roth had a major role in the budget negotiations, though Archer, determined to protect his turf, beat back administration efforts to dictate the tax package. This was vintage Archer, but he can be as prickly with Republican colleagues as he is with Democrats. In a break with his leadership, he's already said that $135 billion in gross tax cuts is "an overly ambitious target."

Similarly, while the White House and Republicans agreed to "roughly" $35 billion in education tax credits, this isn't set in stone. Ways and Means spokesman Ari Fleischer says only that Archer "will do the best he can" to meet the target. Presented with this information late one night during the budget wrangling, Gingrich snapped that some new committee chairmen might be needed. An aide later denied the comment was meant to be taken seriously, and Gingrich and Archer insist they are on good terms. Still, the apparent differences on the education tax provisions underscore the continuing potential for conflict.

It's too early to tell whether the critics will succeed in getting what they want. One top House Republican aide notes that "it's tough to have a seat at the table when you're kicking everyone in the shins underneath the table." That's a jab at folks like Bauer and Weyrich, whose top priority—the $500-per-child tax credit—is vulnerable. Neither Archer nor Roth strongly favors the credit, and business is lukewarm, too.

Republicans could have avoided all this infighting if, instead of allowing their constituency groups to dictate economic policy, they had sought Reagan-style across-the-board reductions in marginal tax rates. Or they could have insisted on a larger tax component in the budget deal. As it is, everyone is scrambling for a piece of a pie that's too small to accommodate everyone's "minimum" demands. The scramble is messy, though fun to watch—particularly if you're a Democrat.

Matthew Rees is a staff writer for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

COLOR COPS ON CAMPUS

by Ward Connerly

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, the "preference cartel" unveiled its propaganda campaign in the third and fourth weeks of April. This campaign is designed to convince the American people that race, gender, and ethnic preferences are good for us. I suspect that its timing is aimed at influencing the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals as it weighs the American Civil Liberties Union's petition for a rehearing of the court's recent decision upholding the constitutionality of California's Proposition 209.

First, on April 14, the Association of American Universities (AAU) adopted a "Diversity Statement" at its annual meeting. To make sure that the statement received sufficient attention, the AAU took out a three-quarters-page advertisement in the *New York Times* at a cost of over $40,000, a sum that could have supported a lot of scholarships and reductions in student fees.

The AAU's statement is a replica of the one issued by the chancellors of the University of California at Berkeley and at Los Angeles during the height of the campaign for Proposition 209, the ballot initiative passed by California voters in November 1996 barring the state from giving preferences on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin. Here's what another higher-education organization—the National Association of Scholars, whose nearly 4,000 members are university faculty, administrators, and graduate students—had to say about the AAU's action: "To be precise, the AAU statement endorses racial and ethnic discrimination in college admission. That the chief

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administrators of so many American universities would publicize their 'strong conviction' in favor of discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity is a sad commentary on the moral, legal and intellectual compass of contemporary academic administration."

If higher education is so flush with money that it can waste it on such expenditures, perhaps the governing boards and taxpayers of every one of the colleges that belong to the AAU should take a closer look at their budgets.

Then on April 25, some of the giants of the corporate world, operating under the name National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, Inc., took out an ad in the *Wall Street Journal* reaffirming their support for affirmative action. One of the unfortunate lessons of the 209 campaign, which I chaired, is that many corporate executives have spines of jello. They know it is politically safer to promote preferences than to be against them. So, instead of opposing preferences and the costly, odious regulatory infrastructure created to implement them, business leaders have mostly chosen to go along.

General Colin Powell next stepped up to the plate in an appearance on *Meet the Press* on April 27. Powell reminded us that there is racism in America and said that affirmative-action programs are needed to help young black kids in the "inner section of Philadelphia." In response to a question, Powell seemed to take exception to Tiger Woods's objection to being called an African American.

Around the same time, the *Michigan Chronicle*, one of Michigan's largest black-owned newspapers, ran an editorial headed "Affirmative action rollback damaging." Parts of it are startling: "If California regent Ward Connerly, who seems to be a Black man in skin color only, takes his crusade nationwide as he has threatened to do, he may do more damage to the aspirations of Blacks academically than George Wallace or Lester Maddox ever did, and that is despicable."

Showing its indifference to the effect of affirmative-action preferences on innocent people, the editorial continues, "While the preferential treatment of Blacks and members of other minority groups is unfair to some Whites who might otherwise gain admission to colleges and universities, it is necessary to ensure that people of all races have an equal opportunity to pursue a higher education. Without these programs as Texas and California have shown, Blacks simply 'need not apply.'"

It is tragic that a black-owned newspaper would suggest to young black people that if colleges and universities refuse to give them preference, there is no point in applying. I know that some ethnic newspapers resort to polarizing tactics to build up circulation, but this is truly outrageous and can fairly be called "race-hustling."

Closing out that week, a San Francisco tabloid, *San Francisco Focus*, published a profile of me that had been in the making for several months, but whose release was timed to coincide with the events mentioned here. Drawing on comments provided by "relatives" who preferred to remain anonymous, the article suggests that I was never as poor as several public accounts have said I was.

Prior to the article's publication, I learned that the writer had been talking with relatives of mine who are not happy with my affirmative-action position. In addition, these relatives have often called on me for personal loans, which I stopped granting after several failures to repay, and for assistance in either hiring or finding jobs for them or their children.

ONE OF THE UNFORTUNATE LESSONS OF THE PROP 209 CAMPAIGN IS THAT MANY CORPORATE EXECUTIVES HAVE SPINES OF JELLO.

Because I have refused to take up the cause of long-estranged relatives who show up on my doorstep every four or five years, but only when they need a favor, some of them are not happy. These are middle-class people who believe society is obligated to give them preference because of their skin color. I cannot argue against preferences for everyone except my relatives, and if this angers them, too bad. It was revealing of the writer's bias that he refused to print one word of what was told to him by my aunt—the person with whom I lived for much of my childhood.

If one compares these events with the 209 campaign, the similarities are striking. I have no doubt that much of this activity is being orchestrated by a well-oiled preference machine. Soon, the women's lobby will surface; newspapers will be deluged with op-ed pieces written by preference proponents; pro-preference journalists and writers will help their allies by doing their opposition research for them, which will show up as "profiles" of anti-preference figures; and countless debates will be scheduled in venues that are hostile to anti-preference forces.

Brace yourselves, America, for a new wave of vitriol, falsehood, and misrepresentation on the question of race and racial preferences.

Ward Connerly, a businessman, is chairman of the American Civil Rights Institute.

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The Anti-China Lobby Grows

by Lawrence F. Kaplan

In the great debate over China, the playing field is becoming more level. On one side is the pro-China lobby, which favors "engagement." What this has come to mean is giving a near-absolute priority to the expansion of economic ties with China. Though it boasts extraordinary financial resources and wields formidable influence in Washington foreign-policy circles, the pro-China lobby commands surprisingly little public support. And insofar as institutions like the editorial pages of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* remain barometers of establishment sentiment, the China lobby may be losing its hold over elite opinion as well.

The pro-China lobby finds itself under challenge from those who support a more muscular policy, either strategic containment of China, cancellation of its most-favored-nation status (MFN), or both. Though it commands neither the money nor the influence of the pro-China lobby, the anti-MFN coalition is quickly becoming one of the most interesting and varied alliances of the post-Cold War era. It includes not just hardline anti-Communists, but economic nationalists, religious conservatives, labor unions, campaign-reform advocates, and human-rights activists.

Indeed, the growing strength of the anti-China forces lies in their extraordinary diversity. Not since the Vietnam-era collapse of a bipartisan foreign-policy consensus has there been an international issue that galvanized the support of so many disparate ideological camps. This week, for example, there is to be a joint press conference in which three groups will come together to oppose MFN: the Family Research Council, composed largely of evangelical Protestants; the United States Catholic Conference; and the AFL-CIO.

The debate has so far pitted "neoconservatives" against "realists," human-rights advocates against corporate spokesmen, the *New Republic* against *National Review.* In short, the debate thus far has been conducted as a conversation between elites. But it will no longer be. Our $40 billion trade deficit with the People's Republic has propelled China into a spotlight of popular frustration once reserved for Japan. Thus, Pat Buchanan, in recent television appearances, press conferences, and op-ed pieces, has sought to direct the ire of his fellow economic nationalists toward China. Buchanan's plea to put "common decency ahead of corporate profit" has been echoed by, among others, Ross Perot, who repeatedly attacked China's trade status during the 1996 campaign. Joining Buchanan from the ranks of the old Right are several persistent anti-Communists, including Terrence Jeffrey, his former aide and now the editor of *Human Events*, and Jesse Helms, who has used his chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to lobby against MFN and repeatedly blast the Chinese government.

It is those who have joined the debate most recently, however, who provide a bridge to the wider electorate. The Christian Right brings the voice of the most influential bloc of conservative voters to the campaign to change China policy. Motivated by China's abortion policy and its persecution of Christians, this unlikely addition to the China debate—religious conservatives have stayed largely silent on foreign-policy issues since the collapse of the Soviet Union—threatens the prospects of the pro-China lobby in a way that no other special interest could.

The array of Christian groups mobilized recently in the fight against MFN is impressive. Aside from the Family Research Council and the Catholic Conference, it includes the Christian Coalition and the Southern Baptist Convention (with its 16 million members). The director of the Family Research Council, Gary Bauer, has organized news conferences, lobbied members of Congress, and run radio and television advertisements to present the Christian case against MFN renewal. One of these, currently playing in California, begins: "The sound of Chinese Christians singing their favorite hymns at an open church service. You listen as hard as you want, but you won't hear the sound of freedom in China today. You see, it's illegal. In fact, the Communist government imprisons and tortures and will even kill those who challenge it. . . . Call your congressman today to say no to Communist special trade privileges."

Struck by the significance of Christian conservatives' entering the fray over MFN, journalist Martin Walker has observed, "The Chinese have no idea what is about to hit them when they take on organized American religion."

Driving the anti-MFN effort on the left, meanwhile, is labor, whose leverage over the Democratic party mirrors the influence religious conservatives wield within the Republican party. Labor views MFN as a threat to low-skilled American jobs, and its critique, not surprisingly, echoes that of Buchanan. Unlike Buchanan, however, labor is spending millions of dollars to promote its message. Unions have enlisted several prominent politicians in their anti-China campaign. One is House minority whip David Bonior, who said of Al Gore's trip to Beijing this spring: "Are we simply going to go to China, stay silent, and raise a glass for signing a couple of contracts that will do little to affect our $40 billion trade deficit?"

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Complementing the labor critique on the left are liberals frustrated by China's abysmal human-rights record. On Capitol Hill, dozens of Democratic legislators have scored the administration for its policy of "de-linking" human rights from trade. They have drawn support from left-leaning scribes, including Nat Hentoff, Anthony Lewis, and Mary McGrory, who has written that "our leaders make excuses for the dragon, with its evil designs . . . as if it were a perfectly nice country with a few regrettable quirks." Echoing McGrory's sentiments on China are the editorial pages of the *Nation*, the *Village Voice*, and *Dissent*, publications for which U.S. involvement in Haiti, Somalia, and Bosnia has prompted a reconsideration of Vietnam-induced suspicions regarding the uses of American power.

Hollywood, still a loyal patron of liberal causes and a powerful voice within the Democratic party, has also embraced the humanitarian critique of China—particularly on the subject of Tibet—with the enthusiasm that so often accompanies its public advocacy campaigns. This year alone, major studios plan to release no fewer than four films that address the plight of Tibetans under Communist rule. And for their part, feminist organizations attack the People's Republic for its "one child" policy, which they hold responsible for widespread female infanticide in rural China. Another interest group on the left, the environmental lobby, has weighed in against MFN on the grounds that Western investment will exacerbate already dangerously high pollution levels in China. Indeed, no major liberal constituency—except of course the administration's "commercial diplomats"—appears to support engagement.

Politicians, too, have constructed an unusual legislative coalition of MFN opponents, a development that has forced the business lobby to shelve its campaign for permanent MFN status. Democratic representative Nancy Pelosi joined Republican House colleagues Frank Wolf and Christopher Smith in an anti-MFN effort in the House of Representatives that has attracted protectionists, civil libertarians, and anti-Communists. They are joined by a growing group of lawmakers that includes, among others, Democrats like Congressional Black Caucus chairman Donald Payne and House minority leader Richard Gephardt, and Republicans like International Relations Committee chairman Benjamin Gilman, Susan Molinari, and Bill Paxon. In the Senate, the anti-MFN alliance includes liberal Democrats Ted Kennedy, Russ Feingold, and Paul Wellstone, as well as many Republicans.

Clearly, the constellation of interests opposed to MFN in both political parties does not augur well for supporters of engagement. Even so, the pro-China lobby is considerably stronger than the anti-MFN coalition—and it includes the sitting administration. But the central problem confronting the China lobby is that its cause commands no popular support. Indeed, to the extent that a successful American foreign policy must rely on public support, the current China policy is a manifest failure.

Public opinion on China, to the extent that there is any, is running in the negative, largely shaped by the Clinton fund-raising scandals. The scandals have, in Pat Buchanan's words, "given us the high political ground." There is, in addition, the attention given to China's outrages on the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek*. Accordingly, recent opinion polls register overwhelming public opposition to MFN. In one such poll, taken last month for THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 61 percent of respondents opposed renewing MFN.

Reflecting this sentiment, municipalities in several states, including New York, have offered legislation that condemns Chinese human-rights violations. Other local governments are considering proposals to "divest," à la South Africa, from companies that do business in the People's Republic. Similarly, Tibet has become a cause célèbre on college campuses, while from an entirely different quarter comes news that shareholders of Motorola, Boeing, and Allied Signal have sponsored resolutions calling on their companies to respond to rights abuses in China.

The possibility that the anti-MFN campaign will find a popular echo provides an endless source of annoyance for supporters of engagement. After all, until recently there was no China debate to speak of. Disturbed by the new debate, such luminaries as Henry Kissinger and Charles William Maynes have charged that "public hysteria" is driving the current campaign. Their fear of popular involvement is understandable. For while defenders of engagement may be able to hold neoconservatives and human-rights activists at bay, it will prove extremely difficult for them to contain indefinitely religious conservatives, American labor, and Buchanan and Perot voters, as well as those for whom China policy and campaign-finance reform have become intertwined.

Supporters of engagement would prefer to rely on the goodwill and, more precisely, the self-interest of the political establishment. But facing widespread popular disapproval, the defection of influential elites, and persistent Chinese belligerence, that goodwill could easily evaporate. Fortunately for those of us who perceive America as something more than a business enterprise and diplomacy as more than commerce, much of it already has.

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Be Afraid.

The Meaning of Deep Blue's Victory

By Charles Krauthammer

"What we have is the world's best chess player vs. Garry Kasparov."
—Louis Gerstner, CEO of IBM

When on May 11 Deep Blue, an IBM computer, defeated Garry Kasparov in the sixth and deciding game of their man-vs.-machine match, the world took notice. It made front pages everywhere. Great story: Box Defeats World Chess Champion. Indeed: Box Defeats Best Player of All Time. Kasparov is so good that in his entire life he has never once lost a match—and he has been involved in some of the epic matches in chess history, including several Ali-Frazier-like classics with former world champion Anatoly Karpov.

Deep Blue won 2-1, with 3 draws. Nonetheless, the real significance of the match lay not in the outcome, however stunning. Why? Because the match was tied until Game Six and Game Six was decided by a simple misplay of the opening. Kasparov played the wrong move order—making what should have been move 9 on move 7—and simply could not recover.

It was a temporary lapse of memory. (Most openings have been tested so many times by trial and error that there is no need to figure them out during the game. You come in knowing them by heart.) Such lapses are fatal against Deep Blue, however. This brute contains in its memory every opening of every recorded game played by every grandmaster ever. Deep Blue's "opening book" spotted the transposition immediately and pounced. Twelve moves later, his position in ruins, Kasparov resigned.

Blunders of this sort are entertaining and sensational. But they are not very illuminating. The real illumination in this match—the lightning flash that shows us the terrors to come—came in Game Two, a game the likes of which had never been seen before.

What was new about Game Two—so new and so terrifying that Kasparov subsequently altered his style, went on the defensive, and eventually suffered a self-confessed psychological collapse ("I lost my fighting spirit")—was that the machine played like a human. Grandmaster observers said that had they not known who was playing they would have imagined that Kasparov was playing one of the great human players, maybe even himself. Machines are not supposed to play this way.

Charles Krauthammer, a contributing editor, last wrote for The Weekly Standard *about the death of the Oslo accords.*

Playing Like a Computer

What did Deep Blue do? What does it mean to play like a human?

We must start by looking at what it means to play like a computer. When computers play chess, or for that matter when they do anything, they do not reason. They do not think. They simply calculate.

In chess, it goes something like this. In any given position, the machine calculates:

"If I do A, and he does B, and I then do C, and he does D . . . then I will end up with position X."

"On the other hand, if I do A and he does B and I do C and he does not D but E . . . I'll end up with position Y."

Deep Blue, the most prodigious calculator in the history of man or machine, can perform this logic operation 200 million times every second. This means that in the average of three minutes allocated for examining a position, it is actually weighing 36 billion different outcomes.

Each outcome is a new position—how the board will look—a few moves down the road (in our example: X and Y). The machine then totes up the pluses and minuses of each final position (for instance, a lost queen is a big minus, bishops stuck behind their own pawns are a smaller minus), chooses the one in 36 billion that has the highest number, and makes the move.

This is called "brute force" calculation and it is how Deep Blue and all good computers work. This is not artificial intelligence, which was the alternative approach to making computers play chess and do other intellectual tasks. In artificial intelligence you try to get the machine to emulate human thinking. You try

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to teach it discrimination, pattern recognition, and the like. Unfortunately, artificial-intelligence machines turn out to be a bust at chess.

The successful machines simply calculate. And it is with this kind of calculating ability that Deep Blue beat Kasparov last year in Game One of their maiden match in Philadelphia. It was the first time a computer had ever won a game from a world champion and it caused a sensation.

It happened this way: Late in the game Deep Blue found its king under fierce attack by Kasparov. Yet Deep Blue momentarily ignored the threat (lose the king and you lose the game) and blithely expended two moves going after a lowly stray (Kasparov) pawn. The experts were aghast. No human player would have dared do this. When your king is exposed, to give Kasparov two extra moves in which to press his attack is an invitation to suicide.

Deep Blue, however, having calculated every possible outcome of the next 10 or 15 moves, had determined it could (1) capture the pawn, then (2) bring its expeditionary force back to defend its king exactly a hairsbreadth before Kasparov could deliver the fatal checkmate, thus (3) foil Kasparov's attack—no matter how he tried it—and then (4) win the game thanks to the extra pawn it had captured on its hair-raising gambit.

So it calculated. And so, being exactly right, it won.

No human would have tried this because no human could have been certain that in this incredibly complex position he had seen every combination. Deep Blue did try it because, up to a certain horizon (10-15 moves into the future), it is omniscient.

Game One in Philadelphia became legend. It was a shock to Kasparov's pride and a tribute to the power of brute tactical calculation. But that is all it was: tactics.

Playing Like a Human

Fast forward to Game Two of this year's match, on May 4. This time the machine won but in a totally different way.

It did not use fancy tactics—tactics being the calculation of parry and thrust, charge and retreat, the tit-for-tat of actual engagement, the working out of "If I do A and you do B and I do C, then X." Game Two allowed for no clever tactics. Its position was closed, meaning that both sides' pieces were fairly locked in and had very few tactical and combinational opportunities.

Kasparov had deliberately maneuvered the game into this structure. He knew (from Game One in Philadelphia) that when the armies are out in the open and exchanging fire rapidly, the machine can outcalcu-

Michael Ramirez

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late him. He knew that his best chance lay in a game of closed positions, where nothing immediate is happening, where the opposing armies make little contact, just eyeing each other warily across the board, maneuvering their units, making subtle changes in their battle lines.

Such strategic, structural contests favor humans. After all, Kasparov does not evaluate 200 million positions per second. He can evaluate three per second at most. But he has such intuition, such feel for the nuances and subtleties that lie in the very structure of any position, that he can instinctively follow the few lines that are profitable and discard the billions of combinations that Deep Blue must look at. Kasparov knows in advance which positions "look" and "feel" right. And in closed strategic games like Game Two, look and feel are everything.

The great chess master Saviely Tartakower once said: "Tactics is what you do when there is something to do. Strategy what you do when there is nothing to do." Strategic contests are contests of implied force and feints, of hints and muted thrusts. They offer nothing (obvious) to do. And they are thus perfectly suited to human flexibility and "feel."

Calculators, on the other hand, are not good at strategy. Which is why historically, when computers—even the great Deep Blue—have been given nothing tactically to do, no tit-for-tat combinations to play with, they have tended to make aimless moves devoid of strategic sense.

Not this time. To the amazement of all, not least Kasparov, in this game drained of tactics, Deep Blue won. Brilliantly. Creatively. Humanly. It played with—forgive me—nuance and subtlety.

How subtle? When it was over, one grandmaster commentator was asked where Kasparov went wrong. He said *he didn't know*. Kasparov had done nothing untoward. He made no obvious errors. He had not overlooked some razzle-dazzle combination. He had simply been gradually, imperceptibly squeezed to death by a machine that got the "feel" of the position better than he.

Why is this important? Because when Deep Blue played like a human, even though reaching its conclusions in a way completely different from a human, something monumental happened: Deep Blue passed the Turing test.

The Turing Test

In 1950, the great mathematician and computer scientist Alan Turing proposed the Turing test for "artificial intelligence." It is brilliantly simple: You put a machine and a human behind a curtain and ask them questions. If you find that you cannot tell which is the human and which is the machine, then the machine has achieved artificial intelligence.

This is, of course, a mechanistic and functional way of defining artificial intelligence. It is not interested in how the machine—or, to be sure, how even the human—comes to its conclusions. It is not interested in what happens in the black box, just what comes out, results. You cannot tell man and machine apart? Then there is no logical reason for denying that the machine has artificially recreated or recapitulated human intelligence.

In Game Two, Deep Blue passed the Turing test. Yes, of course, it was for chess only, a very big caveat. But, first, no one was ever quite sure that a machine ever would pass even this limited test. Kasparov himself was deeply surprised and unnerved by the human-like quality of Deep Blue's play. He was so unnerved, in fact, that after Game Two he spoke darkly of some "hand of God" intervening, a not-so-veiled suggestion that some IBM programmer must have altered Deep Blue's instructions in mid-game. Machines are not supposed to play the way Deep Blue played Game Two. Well, Deep Blue did. (There is absolutely no evidence of human tampering.)

And second, if a computer has passed the Turing test for chess, closed logical system though it may be, that opens the possibility that computers might in time pass the Turing test in other areas.

One reason to believe so is that, in this case, Deep Blue's Turing-like artificial intelligence was achieved by inadvertence. Joe Hoane, one of Deep Blue's programmers, was asked, "How much of your work was devoted specifically to artificial intelligence in emulating human thought?" His answer: "No effort was devoted to [that]. It is not an artificial intelligence project in any way. It is a project in—we play chess through sheer speed of calculation and we just shift through the possibilities and we just pick one line."

You build a machine that does nothing but calculation and it crosses over and creates poetry. This is alchemy. You build a device with enough number-crunching algorithmic power and speed—and, lo, quantity becomes quality, tactics becomes strategy, calculation becomes intuition. Or so it seems. And, according to Turing, what seems is what counts.

From Ape to Archimedes

But is that not what evolution did with us humans: build a device—the brain—of enough neuronal size and complexity that lo, squid begat man, quantity

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begat quality, reflex begat intuition, brain begat mind?

After all, how do humans get intuition and thought and feel? Unless you believe in some metaphysical homunculus hovering over (in?) the brain directing its bits and pieces, you must attribute our strategic, holistic mental abilities to the incredibly complex firing of neurons in the brain. Kasparov does not get the gestalt of a position because some angel whispers in his ear. (Well, maybe Bobby Fischer does. But he's mad.) His brain goes through complex sequences of electrical and chemical events that produce the ability to "see" and "feel" what is going on. It does not look like neurons firing. It does not feel like neurons firing. But it certainly is neurons firing, as confirmed by the lack of chess ability among the dead.

And the increasing size and complexity of the neuronal environment has produced in humans not just the capacity for strategic thought, but consciousness, too. Where does that come from if not from neurons firing? A million years ago, human ancestors were swinging from trees and composing no poetry. They led, shall we say, the unexamined life. And yet with the gradual, non-magical development of ever more complex neuronal attachments and connections, we went from simian to Socrates. Somehow along the way—we know not how it happened but we know *that* it happened—a thought popped up like an overhead cartoon balloon. We became self-aware, like Adam in the Garden.

Unless you are ready to posit that this breakthrough occurred as the result of some physics-defying rupture of nature, you must believe that human intelligence, thought, self-consciousness itself are the evolutionary product of an increasingly complex brain.

But then if the speed and complexity of electrochemical events in the brain can produce thought and actual self-consciousness, why in principle could this not occur in sufficiently complex machines? If it can be done with a carbon-based system, why not with silicon (the stuff of computer chips)?

An even more powerful mystery about human agency is free will. Yet even here we have an inkling of how it might derive from a physical-material base. We know from chaos theory that when systems become complex enough, one goes from the mechanistic universe, where one can predict every molecular collision down to the last one, to a universe of contingency, where one cannot predict the final event. When that final event is human action, we call the contingency that underlies it free will.

I ask again: If contingency, and with it free will, evolved out of the complexity of a carbon-based system, why not with silicon?

"You Can Never Know for Sure . . ."

On May 4 in New York City, a computer demonstrated subtlety and nuance in chess. A more general intelligence will require a level of complexity that might take decades more of advances in computer speed and power. (Not bad, actually, considering that it took nature using its raw materials three billion years to produce intelligence in us.) And it will take perhaps a few centuries more for computers to reach the final, terrifying point of self-awareness, contingency, and autonomous will.

It is, of course, a very long way to go from a chess game on the 35th floor of the Equitable Center to sharing the planet with logic monsters descended distantly from Deep Blue. But we've had our glimpse. For me, the scariest moment of the match occurred when Murray Campbell, one of the creators of Deep Blue, was asked about a particular move the computer made. He replied, "The system searches through many billions of possibilities before it makes its move decision, and to actually figure out exactly why it made its move is impossible. It takes forever. You can look at various lines and get some ideas, but you can never know for sure exactly why it did what it did."

You can never know for sure why it did what it did. The machine has *already* reached such a level of complexity that its own creators cannot trace its individual decisions in a mechanistic A to B to C way. It is simply too complicated. Deep Blue's actions have already eclipsed the power of its own makers to fully fathom. Why did Blue reposition its king's rook on move 23 of Game Two? Murray Campbell isn't sure. Why did Adam eat from the apple? Does *his* maker know?

We certainly know the rules, the equations, the algorithms, the database by which Deep Blue decides. But its makers have put in so many and so much at such levels of complexity—so many equations to be reconciled and to "collide" at once—that we get a result that already has the look of contingency. Indeed, one of the most intriguing and unnerving aspects of Deep Blue is that it does not always make the same move in a given position.

We have the idea that all computers (at least ones that aren't on the blink) are totally predictable adding machines. Put your question in and you will get the answer out—the same answer every time. This is true with your hand-held calculator. Do 7 times 6 and you

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will get 42 every time. It is not true with the kind of problems Deep Blue deals with.

Why? Because Deep Blue consists of 32 computer nodes (of 16 co-processors each) talking to one another at incredible speed. If you present the same question to it a second time, the nodes might talk to one another in a slightly different order (depending on minute alterations in the way tasks are farmed out to the various chips), yielding a different result. In other words, in a replay tomorrow of Game Two, Deep Blue might *not* reposition its king's rook on move 23.

This is not, of course, free will. The machine is not choosing path A rather than path B. But it is a form of contingency—already a qualitative leap beyond the determinism of the calculator—and this is occurring with the computer still in its infancy, barely 50 years old.

To have achieved this level of artificial intelligence—passing the Turing test against the greatest chess player in history—less than 40 years after the invention of the integrated circuit, less than 30 years after the introduction of the microprocessor, should give us pause about the future possibilities of this creation. It will grow ever beyond our control, even our understanding. It will do things that leave its creators baffled—even as Deep Blue's creators today are baffled by their baby's moves.

The skeptics have a final fallback, however. Okay, they say, maybe we will be able to create machines with the capacity for nuance, subtlety, strategic thinking, and even consciousness. But they still could never feel, say, pain, i.e., have the subjective experience we have when a pin is pushed into our finger. No pain, no sadness, no guilt, no jealousy, no joy. Just logic. What kind of creature is that?

The most terrifying of all. Assume the skeptics are right. (I suspect they are.) All they are saying is that we cannot fully replicate humans in silicon. No kidding. The fact is that we will instead be creating a new and different form of being. And infinitely more monstrous: creatures sharing our planet who not only imitate and surpass us in logic, who have perhaps even achieved consciousness and free will, but are utterly devoid of the kind of feelings and emotions that, literally, humanize human beings.

Be afraid.

You might think it is a little early for fear. Well, Garry Kasparov doesn't think so. "I'm not afraid to admit that I'm afraid," said perhaps the most fearless player in the history of chess when asked about his tentative play. When it was all over, he confessed why: "I'm a human being, you know. . . . When I see something that is well beyond my understanding, I'm scared."

We have just seen the ape straighten his back, try out his thumb, utter his first words, and fashion his first arrow. The rest of the script is predictable. Only the time frame is in question. ♦

The Paradox of Cloning

By James Q. Wilson

Let us suppose that it becomes possible to clone human beings. The creation of Dolly the cloned sheep makes this more likely than anyone once suspected. How should we react to this event?

Like most people, I instinctively recoil from the idea. There is, I think, a natural sentiment that is offended by the mental picture of identical babies being produced in some biological factory. When we hear a beautiful model say that she would like to have a clone of herself, we are puzzled. When we recall *The Boys from Brazil*, a story of identical offspring of Adolf Hitler being raised in order to further his horrible work, we are outraged.

But before deciding what we think about cloning, we ought to pause and identify more precisely what it is about the process that is so distressing. My prelimi-

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nary view is that the central problem is not creating an identical twin but creating it without parents.

Happily, we need not react immediately to human cloning. The task of moving from one sheep to many sheep, and from sheep to other animals, and from animals to humans, will be long and difficult. Dolly was the only lamb to emerge out of 277 attempts, and we still do not know how long she will live or what diseases, if any, she might contract.

And the risks attendant on a hasty reaction are great. A premature ban on any scientific effort moving in the direction of cloning could well impede useful research on the genetic basis of diseases or on opportunities for improving agriculture. Already a great deal of work is underway on modifying the genetic structure of laboratory animals in order to study illnesses and to generate human proteins and antibodies. Aware of the value of genetic research, several members of Congress have expressed reservations about quick legislative action. Nevertheless, bills to ban cloning research have been introduced.

IF CLONING IS TO OCCUR, THE CENTRAL PROBLEM IS TO ENSURE THAT IT BE DONE ONLY FOR TWO-PARENT FAMILIES WHO WANT A CHILD FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT.

But even if such bills pass, the argument will be far from over. Congress may regulate or even block cloning research in the United States, but other countries are free to pursue their own strategies. If cloning is illegal in America but legal in Japan or China, Americans will go to those countries as cloning techniques are perfected. Science cannot be stopped. We should have learned this from the way we regulate drug treatments. We can ban a risky but useful drug, but the only effect is to limit its use to those who are willing and able to pay the airfare to Hong Kong.

There are both philosophical and utilitarian objections to cloning. Two philosophical objections exist. The first is that cloning violates God's will by creating an infant in a way that does not depend on human sexual congress or make possible the divine inculcation of a soul. That is true, but so does in vitro fertilization. An egg and a sperm are united outside the human body in a glass container. The fertilized egg is then put into the body of either the woman who produced it or another woman hired to bear the infant. When first proposed, in vitro fertilization was ethically suspect. Today, it is generally accepted, and for good reason. Science supplies what one or both human bodies lack, namely, a reasonable chance to produce an infant. Surely God can endow that infant with a soul. Cloning, of course, removes one of the conjugal partners, but it is hard to imagine that God's desire to bestow a unique soul can be blocked by the fact that the infant does not result from an egg and sperm's joining but instead arises from an embryonic egg's reproducing itself.

The other philosophical objection is that cloning is contrary to nature. This is often asserted by critics of cloning who do not believe in an active God. I sympathize with this reaction, but few critics have yet made clear to me what compelling aspect of nature cloning violates. To the extent this objection has meaning, I think it must arise from the danger that the cloned child will be put to various harmful uses. If so, it cannot easily be distinguished from the more practical problems.

One set of those problems requires us to imagine scientists' cloning children in order to harvest organs and body parts or producing for later use many Adolf Hitlers or Saddam Husseins. I have no doubt that there will arise mad scientists willing to do these things. After all, they have already created poison gas and conducted grisly experiments on prisoners of war and concentration-camp inmates.

But under what circumstances will such abuses occur? Largely, I think, when the cloned child has no parents. Parents, whether they acquire a child by normal birth, artificial insemination, or adoption, will, in the overwhelming majority of cases, become deeply attached to the infant and care for it without regard to its origin. The parental tie is not infallible—infanticide occurs, and some neonates are abandoned in trash bins—but it is powerful and largely independent of the origin of the child. If cloning is to occur, the central problem is to ensure that it be done only for two-parent families who want a child for their own benefit. We should remember that a clone must be borne by a female; it cannot be given birth in a laboratory. A human mother will carry a human clone; she and her husband will determine its fate. Hardly any parents, I think, would allow their child to be used as an organ bank for defective adults or as the next-generation proxy for a malevolent dictator. If the cloned child is born in the same way as a child resulting from marital congress, can it matter to the parents how it was conceived? And if it does not matter to the parents, should it matter to us?

We already have a kind of clone: identical twins.

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They are genetically identical humans. I have not heard of any twin's being used against its will as an unwitting organ bank for its brother or sister. Some may surrender a kidney or bone marrow to their sibling; many may give blood; but none, I think, has been "harvested." The idea that a cloned infant, born to its mother, would be treated differently is, I think, quite far-fetched.

At some time in the future, science may discover a way to produce a clone entirely in the laboratory. That we should ban. Without human birth, the parents' attitude toward the infant will be deeply compromised. Getting a clone from a laboratory would be like getting a puppy from a pet store: Both creatures might be charming, but neither would belong in any meaningful emotional sense to the owner. And unclaimed clones would be disposed of the same way as unclaimed puppies—killed.

There may be parents who, out of fear or ideology, can be persuaded to accept a clone of a Hussein in hopes that they can help produce an unending chain of vicious leaders. This is less far-fetched. We already know from the study of identical twins reared in different families that they are remarkably similar. A cloned Hussein would have an IQ close to that of his father and a personality that (insofar as we can measure these things) would have roughly a 50 percent chance of being like his. Each clone would be like an identical twin: nearly the same in appearance, very similar in intelligence and manner, and alike (but not a duplicate) in personality. We know that the environment will have some effect on each twin's personality, but it is easy to overestimate this. I am struck by how many scientists interested in cloning have reflexively adopted the view that the environment will have a powerful effect on a cloned child. (Cloning seems to have given a large boost to environmentalists.) But that reaction is exaggerated. From the work of Dr. Thomas Bouchard at the University of Minnesota, we know that giving identical twins different environments produces only slightly greater differences in character.

Our best hope for guarding against the duplication of a Saddam Hussein is a practical one. Any cloned offspring would reach maturity 40 or so years after his father was born, and by then so much would have changed—Hussein, Sr. would probably not even be in power, and his country's political system might have been profoundly altered—that it is unlikely Hussein, Jr. could do what his father did.

We do not know how many parents will request cloning, but some will. Suppose the father cannot provide sperm or the mother is unable to produce a fertilizable egg. Such a family now has only two choices—remain childless or adopt. Cloning would create a third choice: duplicate the father or the mother. Some parents who do not want to remain childless will find this more attractive than adoption, which introduces a wholly new and largely unknown genetic factor into

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their family tree. Cloning guarantees that the child's genetic makeup will be identical to that of whichever parent is cloned.

There is, of course, a risk that cloning may increase the number of surrogate mothers, with all of the heartbreak and legal complexities that this entails, but I suspect that surrogates would be no more common for clones than they are for babies conceived in vitro.

More troubling is the possibility that a lesbian couple will use cloning to produce a child. Do we wish to make it easy for a homosexual pair to have children? Governments have different policies on this; let me set aside discussion of this matter for another occasion.

There is one important practical objection to the widespread use of cloning. As every evolutionary scientist knows, the survival of a species depends on two forces—environmental change that rewards some creatures and penalizes others, and sufficient diversity among the species that no matter what the environment, some members of the species will benefit.

Cloning creates the opportunity for people to maximize a valued trait. Suppose we wish to have children with a high IQ, an athletic physique, easily tanned skin, or freedom from a particular genetic disease. By cloning persons who have the desired trait, we can guarantee that the trait will appear in the infant.

This may make good sense to parents, but it is bad news for the species. We have no way of knowing what environmental challenges will confront us in the future. Traits that today are desirable may become irrelevant or harmful in the future; traits that now are unappealing may become essential for human survival in the centuries ahead.

This problem is one for which there is no obvious individual solution. People maximizing the welfare of their infant can inhibit the welfare of the species. One way to constrain a couple's efforts to secure the "perfect" child would be to restrict their choice of genes to either the father or the mother. They could secure a specific genetic product, but they could not obtain what they might think is the ideal product.

But the real constraint on the misuse of cloning comes from a simple human tendency. Many parents do not want a child with particular traits. Conception is a lottery. It produces an offspring that gets roughly half of its genes from its father and half from its mother, but the mixture occurs in unpredictable and fascinating combinations. All parents spend countless delightful hours wondering whether the child has its mother's eyes or its father's smile or its grandfather's nose or its grandmother's personality. And they watch in wonder as the infant becomes an adult with its own unique personality and mannerisms.

I think that most people prefer the lottery to certainty. (I know they prefer sex to cloning.) Lured by the lottery, they help meet the species's need for biological diversity. Moreover, if parents are tempted by certainty but limited to cells taken from either the father or the mother, they will have to ask themselves hard questions.

Do I want another man like the father, who is smart and earns a lot—but whose hair is receding, who has diabetes, and who is so obsessed with work that he is not much fun on weekends? Or do I want another woman like the mother, who is bright and sweet—but who has bad teeth, a family risk of breast cancer, and sleeps too late in the morning?

Not many of us know perfect people, least of all our own parents. If we want to clone a person, most of us will think twice about cloning somebody we already know well. And if we can clone only from among our own family, our desire to do it at all will be much weakened. Perhaps parents' love of entering the reproductive lottery is itself a revelation of evolution at work, one designed to help maintain biological diversity.

In one special case we may want to clone a creature well known to us. My friend Heather Higgins has said that cloning our pets—or at least some pets—may make sense. I would love to have another Labrador retriever just like Winston and another pair of cats exactly like Sarah and Clementine.

The central question facing those who approach cloning with an open mind is whether the gains from human cloning—a remedy for infertility and substitute for adoption—are worth the risks of farming organs, propagating dictators, and impeding evolution. I think that, provided certain conditions are met, the gains will turn out to exceed the risks.

The conditions are those to which I have already referred. Cloning should be permitted only on behalf of two married partners, and the mother should—absent some special medical condition that doctors must certify—carry the fertile tissue to birth. Then the offspring would belong to the parents. This parental constraint would prevent organ farming and the indiscriminate or political misuse of cloning technology.

The major threat cloning produces is a further weakening of the two-parent family. Cloning humans, if it can occur at all, cannot be prevented, but cloning unmarried persons will expand the greatest cultural problem our country now faces. A cloned child, so far as we now know, cannot be produced in a laboratory. A mother must give it birth. Dolly had a mother, and if humans are produced the same way, they will have mothers, also. But not, I hope, unmarried mothers.

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Indeed, given the likely expense and difficulty of cloning, and the absence from it of any sexual pleasure, we are unlikely to see many unmarried teenage girls choosing that method. If unmarried cloning occurs, it is likely to be among affluent persons who think they are entitled to act without the restraints and burdens of family life. They are wrong.

Of course an unmarried or unscrupulous person eager for a cloned offspring may travel from the United States to a place where there are no restrictions of the sort I suggest. There is no way to prevent this. We can try to curtail it by telling anyone who returns to this country with a child born abroad to an American citizen that one of two conditions must be met before the child will be regarded as an American citizen. The parent bringing it back must show by competent medical evidence either that the child is the product of a normal (non-cloned) birth or adoption or that the child, though the product of cloning, belongs to a married couple who will be responsible for it. Failing this, the child could not become an American citizen. But of course some people would evade any restrictions. There is, in short, no way that American law can produce a fail-safe restraint on undesirable cloning.

My view—that cloning presents no special ethical risks if society does all in its power to establish that the child is born to a married woman and is the joint responsibility of the married couple—will not satisfy those whose objections to cloning are chiefly religious. If man is made in the image of God, can man make himself (by cloning) and still be in God's image? I would suggest that producing a fertilized egg by sexual contact does not uniquely determine that image and therefore that non-sexual, in vitro fertilization is acceptable. And if this is so, then non-sexually transplanting cell nuclei into enucleated eggs might also be acceptable.

This is not a view that will commend itself to many devout Christians or Jews. I would ask of them only that they explain what it is about sexual fertilization that so affects God's judgment about the child that results. ♦

Inherit Only the Wind

A Thought Experiment in Support of Estate Taxes

By Irwin M. Stelzer

Conservatives, who seem intent on tearing their movement apart, have come together on two seemingly unrelated issues: affirmative action and inheritance taxes. Both, it seems, are bad. Affirmative action is bad because it *gives* certain groups (blacks, Hispanics, women) an unfair advantage in life's race for success. And inheritance taxes are bad because . . . well, because they *deny* certain groups (inheritors of the product of someone else's success) what Trent Lott calls "a little jump start . . . so that they can be successful."

It seems that if your parents were successful, you are entitled to special treatment by government—a reduced tax (many conservatives prefer zero tax) on income received from your ancestral benefactors. If the Republicans have their way and the new budget accord passes the Congress, if you work hard and have taxable income of $1.2 million, you will pay almost $500,000 in income taxes (married couple, joint return). But if you receive an inheritance of $1.2 million, you pay no taxes. (Technically, it's not you, but the estate that pays, which amounts to the same thing.)

The argument I am about to pose in favor of a draconian inheritance tax is based in part on economics and in part on broader considerations of equity and social policy. I am a firm believer in tax cuts and consider myself very much a libertarian. Given these facts, my position might seem a little quixotic, not to say quirky. So, in the hope of retaining what little affection my fellow conservative friends may have for me, let me classify the discussion I am about to undertake as a "thought experiment"—an attempt to face the impli-

Irwin M. Stelzer, director of regulatory policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, wrote about Tony Blair in last week's issue.

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cations of a conservative worldview as fearlessly as possible.

Like any thought experiment worthy of the name, it is an effort designed to lead my friends to a conclusion far different from the one they now hold. But the opposite is also true—it might result in a rebuttal sufficiently persuasive to convince me of the errors of my ways. In that event, I will willingly accept the notion that some persuasive purpose as yet unrevealed to me is served by lowering the inheritance tax rather than by raising it to a level that is close to confiscatory.

IN TRUTH, IF A BUSINESS OR FARM IS TAXED AT MARKET VALUE, THE INHERITOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO BORROW WHAT'S NECESSARY TO PAY THE TAXES.

My concern is to preserve and strengthen the American culture of entrepreneurship. So let me make it clear that I do not wish to argue in favor of the current system of estate taxes, because the current system does almost nothing to further the entrepreneurial culture (unless you are a lawyer looking to hang out an estate-tax shingle). And so, for the purposes of this argument, I will bend to the most public and tear-stained conservative objection to the estate tax and say that estates in the form of family farms and small businesses should be taxed at a rate of 0 percent. Economically, it doesn't make much difference. Taxes on such assets constitute less than 7 percent of all estate taxes collected in this country. Only one in 25 farmers leaves a taxable estate; the median estate tax paid by farmers is only $5,000; and right now inheritors of small businesses may take over 14 years to pay their estate taxes, with interest charged at a bit below market rates.

Nevertheless, we should eliminate any possibility that our new system of inheritance taxes might result in forced liquidations, and thus go with the zero rate. I say this only to clear this bit of underbrush from our path. But in truth, if a business or farm is taxed at fair market value, the inheritor should still be able to borrow against that asset to raise the necessary taxes and retain a substantial equity position in the business he or she has come into by chance of birth.

But for purposes of this thought experiment (and despite the possibility that it will result in the establishment of bogus businesses as vehicles for tax avoidance) let's pander a bit to conservatives' desire to preserve the balance sheets of inherited farms and businesses in their pristine condition, and exempt them from our inheritance tax.

Now, on to the confiscation.

To begin with, remember that the only wealth transfer that an inheritance tax can interfere with is the part that involves financial assets. An inheritance tax cannot deny children the most important inheritances they receive from their parents. For one thing, it is no longer in substantial dispute that intelligence is substantially heritable; we simply do not know what portion. Nor can tax policy deny children what economist Gary Becker, in his *Treatise on the Family*, calls "endowments of family reputation and connection; [and] knowledge, skills, and goals provided by their family environment." Nor can children be denied the advantages that inhere in what Glenn Loury, in a recent issue of the *Public Interest*, calls "networks of social affiliation"—education, the "parenting skills" of one's mother and father, acculturation, nutrition, and socialization in one's formative years.

A study by Thomas Dunn and Douglas Holtz-Eakin for the National Bureau of Economic Research, for example, suggests that parents' human capital, far more than any financial assets with which they may endow their offspring, affects "the propensity to become self-employed." In other words, the entrepreneurial spirit and the tools needed for success are the best things that parents can bequeath children—and it would be difficult to demonstrate that the fact children know they may be showered with money they did not earn later in life enhances that spirit.

The principal objections to our inheritance tax are that it would give the government more money to waste, and that it could easily be avoided, either with the help of specialists in that art or simply by working less so as to accumulate less. Neither objection withstands scrutiny.

The revenues from such a tax could be used to reduce the marginal rates of income tax, producing all the wondrous benefits conservative supply-siders confidently predict for such a reduction. By such a move we would have reduced the tax on work by increasing the tax on the less productive activity of being around when someone dies. The government gets no more revenue, and the economy grows faster. And—libertarians take note—our new inheritance tax would not represent an increase in the government's power over the citizenry. The compulsion to pay income taxes would be reduced, dollar for dollar, to the extent that the compulsion to pay inheritance taxes was increased. Put slightly differently, the amount of national income subject to government seizure is not increased.

None of this is to deny that the higher the inheritance tax rate, the greater the incentive to devise

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schemes to avoid the tax. Or that there will be many a slip between taxpayer cup and tax-collector lip. But that is true of most taxes: We all know how sales taxes on big-ticket items are avoided by shipping purchases to out-of-state addresses, and how capital-gains taxes are avoided by a variety of techniques such as selling short against the box. The possibility of some tax avoidance, in short, is not a compelling reason to fail to levy a tax that is otherwise justifiable on economic and policy grounds.

No doubt, every effort will be made by those planning their estates to evade a 100 percent inheritance tax. And, given their ability to enlist the finest minds the nation is wasting in the accounting and legal professions—what the Heritage Foundation calls "a substantial cottage industry devoted to estate tax avoidance"—there will be evasion. But such evasion is unlikely to have major anti-social consequences.

Gifts during one's lifetime—$10,000 a year can be transferred tax-free—already provide a bit of an escape. And more can be done in one's children's interests with the money that would otherwise be left behind: Instead of leaving financial or other assets to be taxed, parents might spend large sums enriching the educations of their offspring while the parents are living. To the extent that the inability to leave financial assets to the next generation encourages parents to spend still more on their children's education, parents' incentives to work to meet the costs of such education are increased, and the nation's stock of intellectual capital is enriched.

The other possibility is that oldsters might simply retire sooner in order to accumulate less money. If they elect this option of early leisure, the supply of labor will be reduced, a bad thing from society's point of view. But the now not-so-rich heirs will have to work harder, which would increase the available supply of labor (and younger labor at that). No precise computation of the net effect on labor supply and costs is possible, but there is no reason to believe that society will be the loser by trading some years of oldies' labor for some years of more intense labor by younger folk.

Finally, those about to depart this mortal coil, anticipating that terminal event, might donate their money to charity. No social loss there. Or they might simply spend their money on pleasure binges, a final thumb-in-the-eye to the waiting tax collector. If a 100 percent inheritance tax did indeed induce such consumption, it would replace the eventual consumption of the heirs to whom those who earned the money would in other circumstances have directed it. It is difficult to see what large-scale social loss is involved, unless we want to argue that older people derive less satisfaction per dollar spent than do younger people. This seems highly unlikely, given seniors' superior experience in separating the truly pleasurable from the merely fashionable.

It is important to note at this point that no inheritance tax should apply to transfers of wealth between spouses. Inheritances of spouses are not now taxed, and should not be, since the inheritance consists of accumulated income earned by both, whatever the distribution of work between office and home happened to be.

So there you have it: A policy towards inheritance taxes that is consistent with opposition to affirmative action and other government preference programs, that encourages young people to work, that induces seniors to invest in the intellectual capital of their offspring and to increase their charitable donations, and that promises to lower income taxes and thereby stimulate growth.

These of course are in the main economic arguments against favored tax treatment of inherited wealth. Such arguments can never be dispositive; public policy must be based on more than economics. But it also must be informed by economics, and those who choose to override economic arguments have the burden of rebutting them by showing that the economic costs of their proposals are exceeded by some higher values. And they must, it seems to me, also be quite explicit in describing the social values that should be given precedence over the long-held and very American ideal of equality of opportunity, a level playing field, or whatever term might best describe a fair field with no favors.

> NO DOUBT THERE WILL BE EVASION OF THE INHERITANCE TAX. BUT SUCH EVASION IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE MAJOR ANTI-SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES.

Nothing here suggests that parents be denied the opportunity of passing on to their children any social advantages inherent in their birth or upbringing. Nothing here suggests that parents be in any way limited in what they can spend on adding to their children's intellectual capital, or reduces their incentive to work hard to provide their offspring with the best the world's educational institutions have to offer. I only wonder what economic or social purposes are served by preferential tax treatment that gilds the lily of birth.

What am I missing? ♦

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Take Us to Your Lieder

Franz Schubert, Still a Prodigy After 200 Years

By Jay Nordlinger

The music world is mad for anniversaries, sometimes seeming to organize itself around them. In 1970, it celebrated the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's birth, and in 1985 the 300th anniversary of Bach's. It went hog-wild in 1991 for Mozart—it had been 200 years since his death. Every scrap of Mozart, no matter how ephemeral or inconsequential, was dutifully unearthed and performed on the world's stages, less in homage than willful exhaustiveness. The year 2056—which will see Mozart's 300th birthday—should be a doozie.

This year, it is Schubert's turn, and also—there is a lot of work to do—that of Brahms. Schubert was born in 1797; Brahms died in 1897. Most of the attention is going to Schubert, and it is not entirely apparent why. It could be that every year is a Brahms year, given that composer's near-primacy in the standard repertory. But Schubert is hardly a neglected composer. Indeed, scarcely a day has gone by since his death in 1828 when a song of his has not been performed, or a piano piece, or a chamber work, or one of the symphonies ("finished" or not). The first "Schubertiad"—an evening of music devoted solely to Schubert's work—was held in January 1821, with the composer presiding; this year, Schubertiads will be almost as common as pops concerts.

True, there are reams of Schubert lying around that seldom get performed. Some of this music deserves a wider hearing—his masses, for example—and some of it should be allowed to sleep undisturbed. But anniversary celebrants have little patience for such distinctions. Joseph Epstein has noted that *The Last Tycoon* is read today simply because it is by the author of *The Great Gatsby*. So it is with music.

You might say that the composers who receive the big anniversary treatment are the ones who least need the exposure. Every fancier of music could provide a list of candidates for additional limelight. Jean-Philippe Rameau might be accorded more respect—we missed his 300th birthday in 1983—and so might the piano master Aleksandr Scriabin, the centennial of whose death will occur in 2015. But in classical music, the rich just get richer.

Brian Newbould
Schubert
The Music and the Man
Univ. of California, 480 pp., $39.95

Franz Peter Schubert is one of music's darlings, loved not only as a composer but as a man. Interest in him has never ebbed. A century after his death, some 50 novels had been written about him. He was a strange but compelling man who lived just 31 unrestful years, composing for 18 of them and producing an astonishing one thousand works in that time. His new biographer, Brian Newbould, writes, "If a true composer is one who can seldom escape the compulsion to compose, Schubert was possibly the truest composer of all time." He "spoke the language of music with the naturalness of conversation," combining "the relish and wonder of an amateur with the discipline and technical rigour of a professional."

It may seem odd to defend someone so revered and honored as Schubert, but that is Newbould's project. He feels that his subject is misunderstood—thought of as "a podgy, lovelorn Bohemian *Schwammerl* (mushroom) who scribbled *gemütlich* tunes on the back of menus in idle moments . . ." Newbould takes up the cause of Schubert as a serious, formidable composer, wary of claims that Schubert was a "natural genius." He believes that such a view slights Schubert's intellect and hard-won mastery. To this end, he devotes over half of his 24 chapters to minute analyses of Schubert's music in different media and periods, letting, as he says, "the music dwarf the man." The general reader may wish to skip over these parts—they remind us that, in music, there is no substitute for listening—but Newbould is a rarity: a musicologist who writes well. He succeeds in his aim, always difficult in musical biography, of achieving a "rapprochement" between the popular and the scholarly.

Schubert was a bridge composer, linking the Classical era (represented by Haydn and Mozart) to the Romantic (which crested with Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff). This is not merely a matter of chronology, but of mind and spirit. Yet Newbould is correct that Schubert was "born at exactly the right moment"—and in Vienna, the right place.

Associate editor Jay Nordlinger, our music critic, last wrote for The Weekly Standard *about the pianist Murray Perahia.*

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Schubert was first taught by his father and brother. But he quickly outpaced them and was taken, at seven, to Anton Salieri, the court music director. (Salieri is known today chiefly for his depiction in Peter Schaeffer's entertaining but fallacious story of Mozart, *Amadeus*.) Salieri was to oversee young Schubert's education off and on for the next 12 years, reportedly saying to him, "Franz, you are my pupil, and you will bring me yet more honor." According to Newbould, Salieri "tried to channel [Schubert] into opera composition, using Italian models for practice, and was apparently unable to comprehend [his] enthusiasm for Beethoven or his interest in the writing of Goethe and Schiller as potential song material"—"that barbarous German language," Salieri would say. When Schubert quit him, he had gained much, but glimpsed possibilities far beyond his teacher's limited conception—and, to be fair, that of just about everyone else around except for Beethoven.

Beethoven looms large over this book, sometimes amusingly so. Newbould returns to him again and again, holding him out as the standard, measuring his man against him. Defensive about Schubert's early symphonic efforts, he writes, "But . . . Schubert was twenty-eight when he embarked upon his Ninth Symphony, and when Beethoven was twenty-eight he had not yet produced a first." In 1819, Anton Diabelli invited numerous composers to write variations on a waltz of his creating. Newbould admonishes, "Let our admiration for the towering set of thirty-three variations with which Beethoven responded (after a due interval of three years) not blind us to the characteristic merits of the thirty-two-bar miniature with which Schubert responded at once, before any other of those invited." So there: Schubert's Diabelli variations may not be the equal of Beethoven's, but they were punctual.

This kind of scorekeeping goes on and on, until something rather touching becomes clear: Newbould is envious for Schubert of the whopping 56 years of life granted Beethoven. Schubert was doubtless "awestruck" after an 1824 concert at which Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Ninth Symphony were played, but "he could have pondered the fact that he had just produced two impressive, mature string quartets at an age at which Beethoven had published none. How might he envisage what he could produce when *he* was fifty-four?" Newbould will not let go even unto the end, when he observes that, at the age that Schubert had attained when he died, Beethoven was laboring over his second symphony.

Franz Schubert

Chas Fagan

Schubert soaked up every note of both his contemporary Beethoven and his hero, Mozart ("O Mozart, immortal Mozart," he wrote, "how many, oh how endlessly many such comforting perceptions of a brighter and better life hast thou brought to our souls"). Like them, he attempted every form of music, failing in none of them (although his operas do not show him at his most inspired). He did some schoolteaching in his late teens, but eventually cast his lot with full-time composing, a financially risky proposition. This cost him his first, greatest, and never-forgotten human love, Therese Grob, the daughter of a neighboring family and a soprano in the church choir. Her parents insisted on a more stable husband, and she married a baker (though Schubert, before he died, was to know both fame and prosperity). In 1816, when he was 19, Schubert received a commission to write a *pièce d'occasion*, the cantata *Prometheus*, for which he was paid the tidy sum of 100 florins. He told his diary, "Today I composed for money for the first time." He never ceased and he usually sold.

Newbould reports many interesting cocktail facts, such as that the pianist in an early performance of Schubert's song *Erlkönig* was Mendelssohn. He also tackles the elusive topics, such as Schubert and religion, "a problem that has much teased musicologists." Every music student knows about Schubert the tavern-goer and bon vivant, but fewer know about Schubert the religious seeker, though Schubert, like all com-

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posers of the time trying to earn a living, wrote a good deal of liturgical music. Schubert himself realized that this aspect of his character was overlooked, as when he wrote that his public "wondered greatly at my piety, which I expressed in a hymn to the Holy Virgin [*Ave Maria*]. I think this is due to the fact that I have never forced devotion in myself and never compose hymns or prayers of that kind unless it overcomes me unawares; but then it is usually the right and true devotion."

When he was in his mid-twenties, just hitting his stride as a composer of high, enduring art, Schubert did something tragic and not entirely explained: He fell into debauchery, debauchery so severe that it wrecked and finally cut off his life. Newbould notes this "cruel juxtaposition" of "artistic immortality and temporal mortality," but his guess that "the harsher realities of life" led him to "a lifestyle that triggered the onset of" illness and death is unsatisfying. Whatever the case, Schubert's slide was rapid and horrible.

The illness was syphilis, from whose ravages Schubert reeled for the final fourth of his life. He drank, ate, wenched, and smoked—all indiscriminately—and his pipe may from time to time have been laced with opium. He spent virtually every evening, when his health permitted, making merry in establishments like The Black Cat with his circle, which he once described as "that rough chorus of beer-drinkers and sausage-eaters." Schubert suffered from bouts of acute depression and other types of mental disturbance, for which moderns are full of theories. Newbould is restrained about all of them, as he is about a question that has absorbed the musicological community for the last decade.

No one will be surprised that this question is, Was Schubert homosexual? (He has not yet been regarded as black.) The evidence supporting this notion is slim and manipulable, but one publication, *19th Century Music*, devoted an entire issue to it. Schubert enjoyed the friendship and patronage of Franz von Schober, a monied swell who womanized and boozed right along with Schubert. As to whether there was a physical relationship between the two, Newbould judges that this is "unknown and probably unknowable," though "there was, in any case, evidence of heterosexual urges on both sides." Newbould finds "no reason not to keep an open mind" and concedes that, in Schubert, there were "possible bisexual tendencies," but he is obviously impatient with the question and those who press it, concluding that "we can take some comfort from the certainty that the Schubert inheritance, which is what prompts our interest in the man in the first place, will remain almost wholly impervious to the debate."

Illness, in addition to the hell it imposed, concentrated Schubert's mind, and his last years were a frenzy of composition, with Schubert knowing the urgency of his situation and racing to the finish. Says Newbould, "Each passing year was critical to Schubert, in the sense that each would turn out to represent a considerable proportion of his adult life." His later works are filled both with explosive energy and spiritual contemplativeness (although, as the eminent music historian Sir Donald Tovey remarked too cheekily, all Schubert's works are early works). Schubert would often retreat to the country, to closet himself with his manuscript books. As the outer world grew distant from him, he wrote, "O imagination, thou greatest treasure of man, thou inexhaustible wellspring from which artists . . . drink!" Newbould sees that this was Schubert cherishing his "faculty to compose, worshipping imagination and pleading for it not to desert him, revelling in the creative powers that are enhanced by his current plight."

To his credit, the author does not treat music as biography, the error of countless musical dullards. In one of his savvier passages, he says that those who see the bleak, dispirited song-cycle called *Winterreise* "as a reflection of Schubert's depression or worsening illness have to be cautioned," for a composer works "through a 'persona' who is to some extent free of the day-to-day baggage of [his own] life, suspended above the present reality." Newbould furnishes some apposite examples from Mozart and Beethoven, and adds that, at the time of *Winterreise*, Schubert "was shaping his Piano Trio in B flat, a bright and ebullient work whose opening theme bounces in without preliminaries, brimful of youthful vigour and freshness." The vigor and freshness of that observation, the likes of which the musicological field cries out for, is alone worth the book's publication.

Beethoven died in 1827; Schubert, as a prominent composer, was a torchbearer at his funeral (though the two apparently never met). On his deathbed, Beethoven was shown a group of Schubert songs and exclaimed, "Truly, in Schubert there dwells a divine spark. He will make a great stir in the world." A year later, Schubert was dead. He was still producing, still striving, had the makings of a tenth symphony, was even signed up with the theoretician Simon Sechter for, of all things, lessons.

Newbould aches to know what Schubert would have done with more time—his "parting notes were poised so provocatively in a forward stance"—but don't we all? In the end—as with Mozart and John Keats and innumerable others—such aching is a futile exercise. Schubert would have been worldbeating at 50, yes, but, if we are to play that way, imagine Bach at 120! And, as Newbould recognizes, "Schubert can hardly be thought to have sold us short on his life's work," less than two decades of "phenomenal clock-cheating creativity."

So it is celebration time for Schubert. Just like always. ♦

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Mailer's False Messiah

When Bad Things Happen to Good News

By Paul Mankowski

The story is told of a prominent church historian, notorious both for his learning and his crustiness, who from time to time would find an over-excited grad student in his office, eager to win his master's applause for an original theological insight. Having waved his visitor into a chair, the historian would say, "I am very interested to hear your new theological idea, but, before you explain it, let me tell you three things about it: One. It was already propounded by a 5th-century Syrian monk. Two. He expressed himself better than you will. Three. He was wrong."

It is a pity that Norman Mailer had no recourse to such a mentor, for it might have saved him, and us, the embarrassment of *The Gospel According to the Son*. The embarrassment in this instance is not primarily occasioned by the imputation of heresy. Mailer obviously wants to shock us with the book and has posed for interviewers as a kind of literary Dennis Rodman, delighting in his own naughtiness. Yet he is so far behind the Heterodoxy Curve as to be unaware that his shattering innovations are little more than the platitudes of New Age suburbia, and have long been superseded by those "weekend spirituality workshops" in which feminist nuns and retired orthodontists are taught how to deconstruct the New Testament and make pumpkin bread. Both heresy-hunters and bishop-baiters will feel somewhat let down by Mailer's Gospel. True, he does make an attempt to subvert the orthodox tradition by having Jesus "tell the real story" in his own voice. But, first, this ploy was already used by a Sister of Saint Jude in a summer creative-writing seminar; second, she expressed herself better than he does; third, she got a B.

The prime defect of *The Gospel According to the Son*, from which all others flow, is the author's own uncertainty about the kind of book he meant to write. Sometimes he sees himself as "re-telling the myth" (i.e., taking the Gospel story at face value), and sometimes he sets out to demythologize the traditional account (i.e., to chip away the encrustations of the Christ of Faith from the Jesus of History). These goals are mutually contradictory, and the resultant incoherence is fatal. Mailer's Jesus (Yeshua to his pals) turns out to be a Jewish seminary student who has converted to Methodism but isn't sure why. He shows no curiosity about the disciples who inexplicably collect around him and, in fact, seems unable to maintain interest in his own messiahship.

Norman Mailer
The Gospel According to the Son
Random House, 242 pp., $22

He tells his story in half a dozen different voices as his author struggles to get him into focus. As narrator, for example, he generally speaks in the kind of eco-aphorism that Hollywood scriptwriters put into the mouths of Comanche elders when they want them to sound like sages. "Such tales are to be leaned upon no more than a bush that tears free from its roots and blows about in the wind." "The Word had lived first in water even as the breath that carries our speech comes forth from our mouths in a cloud on a cold winter morning." "But a weight came upon my heart for cursing the roots of another." In fact, sometimes the clueless Yeshua forgets his Galilean Aramaic entirely and talks pure Tontoese: "Did I speak with a forked tongue . . . ?"

His pronouncements occasionally have the sonority and cadence of folk epigrams, but when cashed out add up to nothing at all. I doubt very much whether Mailer himself is aware of this, as some of his metaphors seem to have been accidentally welded together by his word-processor. Try parsing this one: "Yet his eyes were blue like the faded blue of the sky when the sky is white." As Wilde remarked, a simile committing suicide is always a depressing spectacle. (I picture the puzzled editor at Random House tapping his teeth with a pencil as he read the manuscript and ultimately acquiescing with a shrug of resignation: This must be how religious types talk.)

You can almost spot the yellow-highlight stains in the books Mailer read to prepare for the writing of his Gospel, as when Yeshua speaks to us in the voice of a pedantic 20th-century expert: "Joseph . . . told us of a substance called pozzolana, an earth that came from the volcanoes south of Rome; this pozzolana, mixed with lime, became a cement." More often, however, particularly in recounting direct discourse, Yeshua resorts to Jacobean biblical English, spoken in the accents of Cecil B. DeMille: "And in the moment that Elizabeth saw my mother at the door, so did her babe leap in her womb. Overjoyed, she spoke out: 'Blessed art thou, Mary. All generations to come shall call you blessed.'" Again, notice the false pitch: not only the pointless and awkward shift from "thou" to "you," but the fruity "so did her babe leap,"

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in which "so" exists merely to give the sentence a faux-antique veneer.

Elsewhere the eagerness to mimic the syntax of the Authorized Version turns the Gadarene swine into "the swine of Gadarene"—rather like rephrasing "Newtonian physics" as "physics of Newtonian." Sorry, Mr. Mailer, we just don't say it that way in our language.

In fact, except for the incidental archeology footnotes, the novel is unreadable. Perhaps its sentences aren't written to be read but to be listened to, to serve as a kind of Muzak that occupies the back third of our attention with a reassuring drone while the pictures pass before our eyes.

The book reads less like a novel than a B-movie screenplay. A cinematic rather than a literary sensibility governs the selection of material—both the incidents he has borrowed from the four true gospels and the gaps in the life of Christ filled by Mailer's imagination. There is a distinct preference for DRAMA—here understood, as it is in westerns, to mean any scene that includes a weeping woman. My favorite is St. Joseph's discovery of his fiancée's pregnancy: "But then Joseph grew angry and said, 'Why did you bring this shame on yourself?' She began to cry. 'I am innocent,' she told him, 'and I have never known a man.'" Later, not surprisingly, the same imagination treats us to eight pages on Yeshua's encounter with the woman caught in adultery (that's John 8:1-11 in Gospels 1.0). Clearly we are meant to feel suspense here. Will our hero falter? "As I feared, she was beautiful. The bones of her face were delicate, and the hair flowed down her back." Mickey Spillane couldn't have put it better. Yeshua the celibate theology student is aghast to find his id in his cassock and, of course, is immediately in conflict with demons: "My abhorrence of fornication had filled my years with thoughts of lust. I had suffered from ravages of unspent fury. But now I heard the soft voice of a spirit." Relax; it all comes out all right. He remembers himself sufficiently to go beyond the merely physical and ask about her hobbies and interests

Kent Lemon

("Without the flesh," she says, "there is no life") and they part friends. Score that one a draw.

Mailer is not a theologian, not a biblicist, not a man who believes in the Gospel. None of that means he is disqualified from saying something interesting about Jesus. Simone Weil shared all three characteristics with Mailer and yet was endowed with enough philosophical and literary intuition to come to original and valuable insights about the religion she rejected. But Mailer sets himself a tougher job than Weil. Not only does he want to get into the skin of God-become-Man—ambitious enough by itself—but the god with whom he tries to commune is, in his reckoning, neither omnipotent nor omniscient. Consider what this means. If God is defective, then His every attempt to reveal Himself and His will to men is suspect, for the reason that no one, God included, can know with certainty what has been communicated or to whom. All sacred scripture, and all extra-scriptural tradition, is thus intrinsically unreliable. What then becomes of the project agnostics cheerfully call "man's search for God"? What can man possibly find at the end of his quest that he did not bring with him from the beginning?

Viewed in the terms of classical Christology, Mailer's Yeshua turns out to be a Messiah Lite. He had a supernatural conception, but his overbearing mother just wants him "to become a good Essene." The hand-wringing type, he is unsure when his divine Father is speaking to him and when not, and he repeatedly prays, "Help my unbelief." He performs miracles diffidently, and in fact they sometimes fail to come off. The miraculous feeding of the five thousand, Yeshua assures us, was really a feeding of five hundred—not a bad summation of the project of liberal exegetes, by the way: supernaturalism diluted to a 10 percent solution.

After the fast in the desert, Satan tempts the Messiah with "a leg of lamb, well cooked," apparently with some success. In the unintentionally hilarious scene in which he encounters John the Baptist at the river, Yeshua, for the nonce a 14-year-old Catholic, actually goes to confession: "I searched to find evil in myself and came back with no more than moments I could recall of disrespect toward my mother and contests in the night with lustful thoughts. Perhaps there had been a few acts of

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unkindness when judging others." Three Hail Marys is what I'd give him.

At the core Yeshua is no sacramentalist. He's bummed out by churches and by repetition of the same prayers. He's sensitive to the environment. He doesn't get bent out of shape by "men who did not know women but other men." He uses gender-inclusive language. Most wonderfully of all, at the supreme moment of eschatological revelation in which the Messiah makes known to his disciples that the world is to come to an end, he admits, "As I said this I could *feel their pain*." Bingo. When the last veil is torn away, God is a New Democrat. Our Apocalypse is going to be a *caring* Apocalypse. ♦

1968 and All That

A Terrible Year Remembered

By Noemie Emery

Author of books about Robert Kennedy, Richard Nixon, and two (two!) about Spiro Agnew, Jules Witcover brings us back to the time of their convergence in his book *The Year the Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America.* To the personae of 1968, dark things would happen. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were murdered. Four years later, George Wallace was shot, made a cripple. Twelve years later, Allard Lowenstein, the activist who recruited Eugene McCarthy to run for president and thereby drove Lyndon Johnson from office, was himself shot and killed. McCarthy, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey ended 1968 embittered, their reputations diminished. Nixon and Agnew would have theirs diminished as well, later on. In Chicago, riots. Washington burned.

Jules Witcover
The Year the Dream Died
Revisiting 1968 in America
Warner Books, 512 pp., $25

Some other things were diminished too: The liberal consensus, as it existed. The Democratic party, as crafted by Franklin Roosevelt. The country's belief in its nerve and its power. Or, as Witcover has it, the "dream." The "dream," of course, was different things to different people, but it was typical of 1968 that it should take a beating on all sides: the conservative values of order and discipline, the liberal faith in a state-induced justice, the belief of all sides in a rational order, in the logical process of life. What reigned in the dream's stead was destruction both public and personal.

The political roots of 1968 can be found in part in 1960, when Lyndon Johnson was picked as vice-presidential running mate by John Kennedy for two different reasons. He knew that he needed Johnson's home state of Texas. And he also thought Johnson could lead. Lead Johnson did, but the political skills that served him well as a congressional leader did not translate well into national leadership. He became both secretive and grandiose. The war in Vietnam, which had never been declared or even explained fully, would have been controversial in any case. But his manner of conducting the war—the stealth and secrecy with which it was expanded, the imperiousness with which he treated dissent and discussion, the Credibility Gap that emerged on his watch—fed the deep sense that something was wrong in the country, and roused the dissent from Johnson's left.

Enter Robert F. Kennedy, who saw Johnson much as Hamlet saw Claudius, a blowsy satyr on a martyr's throne. Kennedy was courted by Allard K. Lowenstein, a professional architect of civilized protest who had begun to travel the country late in 1967, seeking a Democrat to challenge Johnson in the 1968 campaign. Kennedy demurred, and Lowenstein tried several others before striking tin in Eugene McCarthy, a fey and chilly poet-priest. The temperamental opposite of both Johnson and the brothers Kennedy, McCarthy disdained both ambition and power, and was so far above pandering he could barely ask people for votes. As a cultural stance, this had its attractions—as when it helped make a cult hero of the late Adlai Stevenson—but it could prove a drawback in national politics. Lowenstein said that he had wanted to "roll with joy" when McCarthy committed. He would shortly be tearing his hair.

McCarthy was a charm to the "Clean for Gene" armies, who flocked to New Hampshire in droves. But it soon became clear, to those closer to him, that their hero was, shall we say, flawed. Before the primary, Lowenstein said, his behavior had become so peculiar that a serious Dump McCarthy movement had begun. "He seemed to be paying no attention at all to his campaign," one backer wrote later. "He viewed it as a spontaneous happening. . . . He would arbitrarily cancel events on his schedule which had been painstakingly prepared by many people, or not make a promised speech." Worse, Lowenstein said, McCarthy "entertained what came to be seen as an obsessive hatred of [Robert] Kennedy," a "very profound hate for

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Kennedy, which was shared." Had someone else challenged Johnson, Kennedy might have backed him, and the anti-war movement might have stayed unified. But, with the man he despised in the seat of his brother, Bobby could not bear that another "unworthy" figure should lead the fight he thought of as *his*.

And so, when he decided to run after McCarthy's good showing in New Hampshire, the shape of the year 1968 had been settled. It would not be a "clean" war of McCarthy (or Kennedy) against Johnson (or Humphrey), but a grudge fight within the anti-war movement; a bitter, brutal, civil war. Kennedy courted, or raided, McCarthy's forces, while the McCarthy people grew paranoid. "The Kennedy campaign took the position that everyone was welcome," said Lowenstein, who stayed with McCarthy, unwillingly. "In many places, they wooed people. . . . In the McCarthy campaign, conversely, anybody that had anything kind to say about Kennedy was excluded, and almost driven out." As the campaign progressed, Kennedy developed a messianic dimension, inheriting the cause of Martin Luther King after King's assassination on April 4. As Kennedy drove himself and his crowds to emotional frenzies, McCarthy became more remote and quixotic, talking poetry with Robert Lowell while political work went undone. Kennedy won Indiana and Nebraska. McCarthy won Wisconsin and Oregon. Kennedy won the big prize, California, and was shot on June 4.

Kennedy's death from his wounds a day later left McCarthy unchallenged, in longed-for sole possession of the field. Now was the chance for the ultimate gesture: the gracious hand out to the Kennedy people, the plea to make his cause their own. It was the chance of the year, and of his life. Instead, McCarthy chose the opposite option: He caved. The day after Kennedy's death, he met Hubert Humphrey in a rudderless meeting and sought an egress: "It was clear that what Gene was doing was trying to find a reason to drop out," a Humphrey aide told Witcover later. "He wanted Humphrey to do something that would give him such a reason. He had no more heart for it." In New York for the primary there in June, McCarthy campaigned, Witcover says, "with an aloofness that crowded arrogance." "McCarthy didn't throw cold water on the New York primary—he pissed on it," Harold Ickes, an organizer, said. By the August convention, he had become a spectral non-presence, appearing now and then to insult delegations. By now, the anti-war forces were seeking yet a new leader. And the nomination of Hubert Humphrey was assured.

In 1948, Humphrey had been a brave figure, battling for civil rights before it seemed prudent, or popular. By 1968, he was a broken one, his public antennae decayed. He seemed oddly detached from the crises about him, prating of "joy" in a season of murder and turbulence, unable to comprehend why voters were troubled by violence or by the smell of tear gas in the streets.

Nineteen sixty-eight was the year the Democrats destroyed themselves. The constituencies represented by the three primary candidates diverged, and never quite came back together. McCarthy's elites took over the party machinery. Many Humphrey backers became Nixon's Silent Majority, then Reagan Democrats. Kennedy's followers split, becoming essentially leaderless. In fact, it is with the death of King and Robert Kennedy that the civil-rights movement and the liberal tradition began their long move from the mainstream to the fringe of the political culture from which they have not yet returned. Why? "In 1968, the Democratic Party underwent a kind of cultural brain transplant," Witcover quotes William Bennett as saying. "The word 'traditional' became synonymous with 'wrong.'" "Traditional" was not "wrong" to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, to Harry Truman. One forgets how corny these people had been in their instincts, how devout in reflexive American patriotism, how middle class in their cultural tastes and their fancies, how fond of the ethic of duty and effort, how sure that they knew Right and Wrong. It was these things that the Left began to demolish, fueled by their rage at the year, and their leaders. If the Right, misled by George Wallace, veered off into repression and mindless jingoism, the Left veered off to mindless nihilism and violence: confusing one war with all war, bad rules with all rules, and one administration they disliked and distrusted with all of American history. Witcover quotes Barney Frank saying, "Cops used to vote Democratic, and then they heard the kids saying, 'You're the motherf—er, and your wife's a whore.'" This drove the stake through the heart of the FDR party. It has not been remade to this day.

The real mark of 1968, as Witcover tells us, was the start of the rise of the Right. Alan Brinkley puts it this way: "Wallace's vote, combined with Nixon's—a total of 56.7%—was the real measure of what happened . . . with the Democratic vote dropping from 61.1% for Johnson in 1964 to only 42.7% for Humphrey . . . a vote against the counterculture, against violence, and for law and order." "Law and order," which liberals took (and still take) as a code word for race, was really a code for them and their values. It was this in the end that elected Nixon, and against which George Wallace campaigned. The point of the latter was missed at the time. As Brinkley says, "Very few people were willing to take literally what he [Wallace] was talking about, which was law and order, long-haired demonstrators, pointy-headed intellectuals, and bureaucrats. . . . Race was certainly a part of that message, but it wasn't race alone."

"Bring us together," Nixon said, as he won the prize he had longed for.

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But he did not. Divisions continued. He helped to exploit them. In the end, he and his people proved as duplicitous as the regime they supplanted. As for the "kids"—the protesters, who held them all up to judgment—they in their turn would prove equally tainted, equally untruthful and corrupt.

Bill Clinton has revived the Credibility Gap, and given it new stature and meaning. Harold Ickes, the activist of 1968, faces legal and ethical charges. Hillary Clinton may fancy herself another Eleanor Roosevelt, but the presidential figure she is linked to most often is none other than Richard M. Nixon. The pious protesters of 1968 and the years after are not the correctives to Johnson and Nixon, but their worthy successors. No wonder the dream is still dead.

Another peculiar American fancy met its death in that terrible era: the belief that a crisis calls up a great leader, a Washington, a Lincoln, a Franklin Roosevelt, crafted to meet it. Now and then, a great man will appear without crisis—a Theodore Roosevelt, to his immense irritation—or a man who is not great will rise to his moment, and in it still do some great things. The years 1789, 1860, 1941, even 1945 show us what occurs in these times—when men meet and master their moments. On the other hand, 1968 shows us what happens when crises arise without great, or even good, men to meet them. Every "leader" who emerged in that year either defaulted on his obligations to his country and people, or led opinion in the wrong direction. If Harry Truman is known as the man who rose to meet his occasion, one may say safely that Humphrey, McCarthy, Nixon, Wallace, and Agnew all fell very far below theirs. ♦

On Re-seeing 'Austin Powers'

A Moviegoer's Diary

By John Podhoretz

Sunday, May 4. My friend Rick is eager to go with me to a movie he has already seen called ***Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery***. I am looking forward to *Austin Powers*—a James Bond parody starring and written by the brilliant sketch comedian Mike Myers—and I appreciate the gesture, but surely Rick would rather take in a movie neither one of us has yet seen. Nothing doing; his preference is a repeat viewing of *Austin Powers*, and off we go.

Why *do* people see movies more than once? (This is not a casual question for Hollywood: Studios want to make blockbusters, and a movie becomes a blockbuster solely because it inspires repeat viewing.) One need only study the way small children can watch a video a hundred times over or be read the same book every night for a year to understand that it is part of human nature to find comfort in repetition. But there is also a more generous, less solipsistic impulse involved in repeat moviegoing. Consider the Sherpas of the Multiplex, those hardy souls who go alone, often on the first night a new movie is released, decide whether it passes muster, and then bring friends and family with them a second time. These trailblazers—I was one once—are people still bubbly with enthusiasm about the movies and eager to share their excitement with their loved ones.

For people who can take real pleasure in moviegoing—people like my friend Rick—it is not necessary that the movies they see again be perfect, wonderful, even wholly good. Often a single memorable performance, a single memorable scene, is worth the price of two admissions. That is true of *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery*, which has an opening sequence and a title character so hilarious and lovable that you can't help feeling fondly about the whole movie even during its dull stretches. It begins in London in 1967—not the real London of the day, but the London we saw in countless movies at the time, a bright and cheerful metropolis in which mobs of painfully skinny girls in hideously colorful frocks are prone to breaking into the Frug right there on Carnaby Street. A zippy, catchy little tune plays on the soundtrack as these Twiggies spot glamorous photographer Austin Powers, the most popular man in all of London; they dance with him and then chase him, Beatles-style, through Piccadilly.

Austin Powers is an inspired creation, a sweet-natured little guy in blue velour with the huge, crooked, slightly green teeth that were once every Brit's birthright. Only at a time of mass delusion like the 1960s could such a funny-looking creature be a sex symbol. Powers speaks in an amazingly stunted vocabulary made up of '60s double entendres: His favorite word is "Shagadelic," and he flirts with women by baring his choppers in a crooked smile and offering the mock warning "Oh, *behave!*" It turns out his photography business is just a front; he's actually a secret agent on the trail of a bad guy named Dr. Evil (also played by Myers with an outrageously thick Canadian accent). When Dr. Evil shoots himself into space for 30 years, Austin Powers agrees to be cryogenically

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frozen and thawed out in 1997 to fight his nemesis yet again.

When Austin emerges in 1997, the movie turns into a conventional fish-out-of-water comedy: He discovers that his freewheeling expectations of casual sex horrify his new female sidekick; he tries to play a CD on a turntable. The movie has more fun with Dr. Evil and his difficulties adjusting to the new order. Dr. Evil's favorite obscenity is "fricking"; and when he announces his plan to detonate a nuclear device that will destroy the world, he tells the world's leaders that he expects a ransom in the amount of *one million dollars*! (His associate, who has been running the Dr. Evil empire in his absence, has to explain that their legitimate cell-phone business alone earns more than $9 billion a year.) Dr. Evil later attends a support-group meeting with his slacker son Scott and then has the group eliminated because it criticized his parenting.

Rick, I think, wanted to see the movie again just to hear Myers, as Dr. Evil, mutter the words, "I didn't spend six years in evil medical school to have to listen to this." For that, you ask, it was worth the ungodly sum of $9 (that was the price of a ticket at New York's number-one moviehouse, the Lincoln Square)? The answer is yes. I've watched *Breakfast at Tiffany's* many times just to hear Martin Balsam speak the words "Irving baby" and "Fred baby." (You have to see the movie to understand.)

Tuesday, May 6. I would never want to see the movie ***Breakdown*** again, but that's not because I didn't like it. I did like it, very much, but it's a movie that depends on your having no idea where on earth it's going next. Now that I know, it would probably seem tiresome and forced on second viewing. In *Breakdown*, a couple (Kurt Russell and Kathleen Quinlan) driving cross country find themselves stranded on a lonely highway when their Jeep Cherokee suddenly gives out. A friendly trucker comes by and offers them a lift to a nearby diner; Kurt decides to stay with the car while Kathleen goes. She doesn't come back. No one has seen her at the diner; the friendly trucker denies ever having seen Kurt before; the police think Kathleen has run away from her husband; Kurt is alone, friendless, and terrified.

We know that Kurt and Kathleen are dead broke; what happens if the kidnappers demand money? Are the local cops in on it? How big is the conspiracy? This is a classic setup for a thriller; it worked 60 years ago in Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*, and it works today, partly because writer-director Jonathan Mostow turns the beautiful Canyon country of the Southwest into territory as unfamiliar, frightening, and alive as a haunted house. Mostly, though, it works because of Kurt Russell, who gives a masterful performance—without being in the least showy or histrionic, he lets you understand how his character is feeling every step of the way, makes you identify with him, like him, admire him, feel sorry for him, and ultimately, enjoy his triumph over the bad guys.

MOVIES WE SEE AGAIN NEED NOT BE PERFECT, OR EVEN GOOD—A SINGLE PERFORMANCE OR SCENE WILL DO IT.

Wednesday, May 14. The new Bruce Willis movie ***The Fifth Element*** cost $96 million, which means that it will make money only if teenagers go to see it again. They just might. *The Fifth Element* is an almost unbelievably stupid science-fiction movie—mind-numbingly sentimental on the one hand and mind-numbingly violent on the other. So why would anyone go again? Because *The Fifth Element* is simply amazing-looking. In fact, there hasn't been a movie this amazing-looking since the one on which it is clearly modeled, Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. The two movies are set in dirty, lively, beautiful futuristic cityscapes full of teeming hordes and feature ordinary men who must interact with engineered human-like beings superior to them in every way but one: their lack of humanity.

Like *Blade Runner*, *The Fifth Element* has an unsatisfying plot line, an ineffectual starring performance (Bruce Willis here, Harrison Ford in *Blade Runner*), and dialogue that is often inaudible. But where *Blade Runner* was concerned, none of that mattered; now, 15 years after its release, we can say with certainty that *Blade Runner* represents the most imaginative use of visual design in the history of the movies and is a classic for that reason alone.

I don't think *The Fifth Element* comes anywhere close to that, but unlike Ridley Scott, who thought he was making a masterpiece and therefore made *Blade Runner* too pompous and portentous, co-writer/director Luc Besson is basically just trying to show us a roaring good time. There are sequences in *The Fifth Element* that really don't look like anything else you've ever seen. A flying-car chase through a New York City where the buildings appear to be 500 stories tall is the high point but another sequence featuring a blue-skinned alien beauty bigger than Wilt Chamberlain who simply stands on a stage singing opera is almost as dazzling.

If I were 16, I would have seen it four times already. But I am 20 years older, and, like Rick, I think I would prefer to spend my money seeing the first couple of minutes of *Austin Powers* again. ♦

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Newsweek has recalled a special issue on child health because it suggested letting five-month-olds feed themselves chunks of carrots and zwieback crackers—bad choices that could easily choke a child that young.
—*News item*

Parody

'Hints from Heloise' Backtracks

Docs Dispute Suggestion "X-Acto Knives Make Good Q-Tip Substitutes"

CAR & DRIVER RECALLS "HOW TO DRIVE" ISSUE

"Chug five martinis and step on it" is bad counsel, says MADD

Travel & Leisure Pulls Cover

"Rwanda the Beautiful" Feature May Have Misled, Experts Say

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